

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMOUR AND SATIRE IN PERSIA

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO

'UBAID ZĀKĀNI

PRESENTED BY

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ABSTRACT

‘Ubaid-i Zākānī (d. 771/1369) was the most eminent humorist and satirist in Persian literature. However, despite his great contribution to Persian satire, his position has not yet been evaluated properly. He has been unjustly libelled as an "infernal" (jahannamī) and indecent satirist. The aim of this thesis is to expose some of his ideas by a systematic analysis of his thoughts as they are presented in his own major treatises, and it has been thought necessary to preface this work with some general remarks on satire as a literary genre and some of its early exponents. Hence, this thesis presents two introductory chapters on Persian satire, its motives, techniques, and dwells on the other branches of satirical literature (Chapter I), and then proceeds to some brief information on Arabic and Persian humorists and satirists: both legendary (or semi-historical) and historical (Chapter II). Chapter III consists of a survey of the historical evidence concerning ‘Ubaid's life, education and the conditions of the society in which he lived, and Chapter IV presents a survey of his satirical writings. In Chapter V there is offered an analysis of the topics of ‘Ubaid's satire which is divided into three sections: religious, political and ethical. In Chapter VI, the sources of ‘Ubaid's satirical anecdotes are discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

It was while working on another aspect of Islamic literature that I was drawn, not without some misgivings, to the topic of this thesis, which still bears some of the marks of the reluctance with which I embarked on this study. My reluctance comes from the consideration that while satire, facetiae and witticism in general are common to all peoples, including those of Islam, and their literature, too, is full of examples of this genre, in Iran, however, there exists a powerful body of opinion which has attempted, throughout history, to oppose this particular literary trend regarding it as contrary to religion and conventional morality. Hence this type of literature has often been dismissed out of hand.

While I myself entertained, to some degree, a distaste for many aspects of this genre, my study of Islamic adab, in general, and the dīwāns of the Persian poets, in particular, confirmed an impression that there are only a few literary works which do not contain some examples of facetious, humorous or satirical prose or verse. This single fact encouraged me, for by reading these texts I realised that all of their authors, with few exceptions, were moral and religious enough, but they nevertheless have included these types of literature in their books or dīwāns in order to entertain their readers, or rid themselves of vexation. Furthermore, in order to avoid confrontation with principles held sacrosanct by the authorities, they quoted verses from Koran and the Traditions which lent weight to the legality of their actions.

The second point which encouraged me in my task was the fact that for a long time I had come to the conclusion that all Persian poetry,

with the possible exception of the mystical and epic, contain, for the larger part, insipid and unattractive verses written in praise of nobles, kings, local suzerains, ministers and such like. An uncritical reading of this type of poetry would lead the reader to conclude that Iran has been blessed by unending generations of wise and compassionate rulers under whose blessed government all elements of society prospered in an unbroken period of peace and harmony. In the many books of ethics, history and poetry we are given an impression of Iranian history that from the reign of Darius the Achaemenian (c. 550-485 B.C.), up to our own time, all kings, ministers and nobility were, by and large, honest, compassionate, wise and meritorious, and at no time do we find a ruler in whose reign the sheep and the wolves did not drink from the very same spring, and the cat did not live at peace with the mice. However, every man of sense knows that this was not the case. The main literary source which enables us to understand this bare fact is the satirical, humorous, and to a great degree, the indecent literature of this nation. It is clear that the satirists and those who played the fool, were neither fools, nor bitter by nature. They were often sensitive, quick feeling and sophisticated people who, observing their disordered society and the immorality of the authorities, poured out their anger and indignation in their writings.

My third motive for dwelling on this topic is that for a long time, while reading 'Ubaid's works along with the dīwān of Ḥāfiẓ, I used to read books of Arabic adab, and from time to time I would come across many anecdotes common to these separate works. I was struck by the fact that 'Ubaid had borrowed many of them, changing only the unfamiliar Arabic names to the better-known Persian ones in order to popularize them, thus giving them greater appeal to his Persian

readership. I was therefore encouraged to collect and note the similarity between them. The result of this attempt is included in this thesis (Chapter VI).

For such a study, however, I required an authentic text of 'Ubaid's complete satirical writings to supplement a published version edited by the late 'Abbās Iqbāl. For this purpose I have used two MSS of his writings, the first is an undated MS in the British Museum (Or. 6303), the second in Paris (Suppl. Persan 824, Bibliothèque Nationale) was copied in Muḥarram 834 (Sept.-Oct. 1430). The former MS is not, however, very helpful, for, besides being copied at a later date, the copyist seems to have been particularly inept or careless. Many of the Arabic anecdotes, and especially the nawādir al-anthāl, are full of mistakes, and in the Persian anecdotes he has arbitrarily changed many of the phrases and words to suit a more modern taste. The latter, however, is a very much older copy and seems authentic, having been copied only 64 years after 'Ubaid's death.

The chief purpose of this thesis is to discuss 'Ubaid's humorous and critical satires with special reference to its origins as far as it is possible, in the hope of reconstructing 'Ubaid's personal career and character and to throw light upon that important period of Persian history and to study the general conditions of that age.

'Ubaid was the greatest of the Persian satirist-poets who lived in the eighth century A.H. This much we know, but hardly anything else about him is certain. While most satirists reveal something of their personality in their works, 'Ubaid, however, draws a veil across his persona. Neither do contemporary authors throw any light upon his character save Ḥamdallāh Mustawfī (d. ca. 750/1349), who speaks of him as being "from a noble family and has written peerless treatises."

That is all. The external life of a satirist seems to have been considered less important than the views he held; what matters is the record of his intellect and this is clearly registered in his critical satires. The topics of his satire have, for the purposes of this present thesis, been divided into three parts: religious, political and ethical.

In 'Ubaid's writings, there is no regularity of the kind which one finds in philosophical works, and his ideas are scattered here and there throughout his treatises. This is particularly true about his religious and political satires, but we can observe some attempt at order in his ethical satires. In the last case, he first describes the Four Capital Virtues according to the peripatetic philosophers, then he launches his own attacks on the morality of the age, and ridicules the attitude of the nobility of the period towards these virtues. These critical attacks are partly amusing and partly indecent to the extent that they are virtually untranslatable. This, however, is merely their superficial aspect, for they contain an inner meaning and in this we have a veritable tour de force in the history of Persian literature. He introduces us to a world full of bitter realities and a true understanding of the moral and political defects of his age.

The synopsis of 'Ubaid's religious critiques holds that "religion is the imitation of the ancestors", and this servile imitation invites the disasters which afflict mankind in general, and Muslims in particular; consequently the latter "have been surpassed by everybody".

Finally, 'Ubaid's political satire constitutes the fiercest attack on the despotism of sovereigns and local rulers to be found in Persian literature. Here, the satirist-poet exposes the futility of warfare and ridicules those rulers who are intoxicated by their success in battle at the expense of victims of war, the dead, the wounded, the homeless and the hopeless.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Introduction	iii- vi
Chapter I: Summary of Persian Satirical Techniques and Terms	1- 55
Discussion on <u>hazl</u> and <u>hajw</u> and related terms	1- 14
The Motives for Satire	14- 20
Techniques of Satire	20- 45
List of Satirical and Facetious Terms in Persian and Arabic	45- 55
Chapter II: Arabic and Persian Satirists up to the Time of 'Ubaid	56-138
General remarks on Humour in early Islam	56- 60
Short discussion on Ash'ab, Juhā, Muzabbid, Jumayyiz, Jammāz, Buhlūl al-Majmun, Abu 'l-'Aynā', 'Ubādat al-Mukhannath, Abū Yazīd, Iyās b. Mu'āwiya	60- 69
Semi-Historical Persian Humorists: Abū Bakr, Rubābī, Azhar-i Khar, Talkhak	69- 73
Historical Satirists and Humorists	73-138
A. Arabic: Hassān b. Thābit, Huṭay'a, al-Akḥṭal, al-Farazdaq, Jarīr, Yazīd b. Muffarigh al-Himyarī, Bashshār b. Burd, Abū Nuwās, Jāḥiẓ al-Baṣrī, Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī	73- 94
B. Persian: Rudakī, Ṣāhib b. 'Abbād, 'Asjadī, Manuchihrī, Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī, Azraqī of Herāt, 'Am'aq of Bukhārā, Rashīdī of Samarqand, Ṭayyān of Marv, Manjīk Tarmidhī, Anwarī, Sanā'ī, Khāqānī, Suzānī, Mawlawī-i Rumī, Sa'dī, Majd-i Hamgar, 'Adud al-Dīn Ijī, Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrazī	94-138
Chapter III: 'Ubaid's Life, Learning, Patron s	139-165
His Life	139-147
His Learning	147-151
His Patrons	151-165

Chapter IV

166-194

- A. Serious Writings: Fāl-nāma-i Burūj,
Fālnāma-i Wuhush u Tuyūr, Mathnawī-i Sang
Tarāsh and Nawādir al-Amthāl 166-169
- B. Satirical Writings: Akhlāq al-Ashrāf,
Ta'rifāt, Ta'rifāt-i Mullā du Piāza,
Risāla-i Ṣad Pand, Rīsh-nāma, Risāla-i
Dilgūshā -- examples of both Arabic and
Persian anecdotes from this treatise with
a short discussion on 'Ubaid's sources.
Ash'ār-i Hazliya wa Tadmīnāt, Maktūbāt-i
Qalandarān, Mush u Gurba -- the analysis
of the tale 169-194

Chapter V: The Topics of 'Ubaid's Humour and Satire

195-250

- Part I. Religious: Shi'ites and Sunnites 195-201
The Shaikh, Zāhid, Faqīh and Imām 201-207
The Khaṭīb, Wā'iz and Qārī 207-212
Rind, Ṣūfī 212-218
- Part II. Political: Some notes on politics
and the nature of tyrannical governments
in Persia in particular, and in the Islamic
areas in general 218-221
Accepted and abrogated views in politics 221-229
Family -- Women and Children 229-237
- Part III. Ethical: 'Ubaid's views on four
cardinal virtues, both accepted and
abrogated 237-250

Chapter VI: The Source of 'Ubaid's anecdotes

251-274

1. Arabic 252-261
2. Persian 261-274

Bibliography

275-288

CHAPTER I

SUMMARY OF PERSIAN SATIRICAL TECHNIQUES AND TERMS

It should be mentioned first of all that it is never easy to frame precise definitions of literary genera, and attempts to do so are rarely profitable, for one form blurs into another. We know well enough what is meant by a lyric, but we are sometimes hard put to determine whether or not a given poem should be defined as a lyric. Still more is this the case with satire.

The Arabic term "Hijā" is often translated by "satire" or "epigram", but it denotes more precisely a curse, invective, diatribe or insult in verse, an insulting poem, thence an epigram, and finally a satire in either prose or verse. "Hijā", according to Ibn Rashīq (d. 463/1070), "varies between insinuation and frank assertion."¹ We have a vast number of words both in the Arabic and Persian languages whose exact definitions are not known. Words such as istihzā' (derision), badhā' (abuse), taskhar (mockery), tanz (irony), tazāruf (display witticism), tahakkum (derision, Socratic irony), dushmām (abuse), dhamm (insult), sukhriyya (mockery, derision), khush-tab'ī (witticism), ta'n (sarcasm), zarāfat (humour), muzāh (humour), madhaka (ridicule), hijā and hazl (facetiae), and many others often admit of little distinction, and educated people and even men of letters will use one of them in place of another, and there is little evidence that any Islamic scholar has applied himself to defining these various terms. This is the case to

1. Ibn Rashīq, al-'Umda, Vol.II, p. 170.

some extent in Western languages in general and English in particular. We have words such as buffoonery, comic, diatribe, facetiae, fun, hoax, humour, invective, irony, jest, joke, lampoon, mimicry, obscenity, raillery, ribaldry, sarcasm, satire, travesty, waggery, witticism, and so forth. It is perhaps the purpose that defines most of them. One reason for this is probably that the "subject-matter of satire is multifarious, but its vocabulary and the texture of its style are difficult to mistake, and, although sometimes used in other types of literature, are most concentrated and effective in satire."¹

There are, however, some general aspects in distinguishing satire from other forms of literature. First of all, satirical writings, particularly in Persian and mostly in Arabic — whence Persian satirists have obtained certain materials and techniques —, contain cruel and indecent words; all satiric writings contain colloquial anti-literary vocabulary, and we can venture to say that as soon as the author begins to arrange his thoughts under strictly logical headings, and to cut away all irrelevancies embellishing his literary style in a tone of unvarying seriousness, he is not writing satire. In other words, almost all good and effective satires are constantly varying both in style and content.

* * * * *

The original Latin word "satura", from which the word satire comes, merely denotes "medley", "hotch-potch", or simply things mingled.² Satire, again writes G. Highet,

1. Highet, The Anatomy of Satire, p. 231.

2. C.W. Mendell, "Satire as Popular Philosophy", pp. 138-9; The Satires of Horace and Persius, tr. Naill Rudd, pp. 1-3.

means primarily "full", and then comes to mean "a mixture full of different things." It seems to have been part of a vocabulary of food. We have the recipe of a sort of salad called satura; a dish full of mixed first-fruits offered to the gods called lanx satura; and Juvenal, no doubt in allusion to this strain of meaning, calls by the name of another mixed food, farrago, a mish-mash of grain given to cattle. 1

This is the case, too, with most Arabic and Persian satirists. Take, for example, Jāhiz, Ibn Qutayba, and especially Abu 'l-Faraj al-Isfahani; nobody is able to find in the writings of these famous writers the same classification and regularity as in logical, philosophical books and serious literature. They usually go from serious subjects to witty ones and vice-versa, from a certain person to another just like the nightingale which sits on a certain tree and sings a song, only to fly to another to sing a different song. Abu al-Faraj says at the very beginning of his celebrated book al-Aghānī,

The nature of human beings are created so that they wish to pass from one subject-matter to another, from what is known to what is unknown. And passing from a previous subject with which he is acquainted to a fresh one, is very desirable, and anything which is yet to come dominates the heart more than anything which has already arrived ... 2

Thus, we are proposing in this thesis that the entire literature of Persia can be divided into two groups: the serious and the playful; and in the latter is placed all the satirical and coarse critical element of Persian language. Before presenting a list of Persian satirical and facetious terms, it is necessary to discuss first "hazl" (facetious saying) and "hijā'" (satire) in some detail.

1. The Anatomy of Satire, p. 231. See also G. Highet, Juvenal the Satirist, p. 51.

2. al-Aghānī, Vol. 1, p. 4:

« وَ فِي طَبَاعِ الْبَشَرِ مَعَبَّةٌ لَا تُنْقَالُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَى شَيْءٍ، وَإِلَّا سُرَّاحَةً مِنْ مَعْبُودٍ إِلَى مُسْتَعْبَدٍ. وَكُلُّ مُنْقَلٍ إِلَيْهِ أَشْهَى إِلَى النَّفْسِ مِنَ الْمُنْقَلِ عَنْهُ، وَالْمُنْتَظَرُ أَغْلَبُ إِلَى الْقَلْبِ مِنَ الْمَوْجُودِ... »

"Hazl" in Persian literature means humour (muzāh kardan), talking nonsense (bihudeh guftan) and finally lying and uttering speeches which are opposite to the truth (durugh wa khilaf-i waqi'a wa kidhb).¹

According to the men of letters, al-Jurjāni (d. 471/1078) maintains that hazl denotes the use of a word by which is intended neither its real nor metaphorical meaning, and is the opposite to serious.² It seems, however, that this definition is not precise, for if a word signifies neither the real nor the metaphorical, it becomes nonsense (muhmal), whereas hazl sometimes conveys exactly the same meaning of a word as the serious one. A contemporary man of letters defines hazl as "a poem in which somebody has been insulted, and inadmissible qualities ascribed to him, or a speech by which is rendered some impolite or anti-ethical meaning."³ Nonetheless it is worth noting that hazl is not limited only to poetry, as a lot of excellent hazls have been written in prose as well; and in fact the first part of this definition recalls to the mind the description of hijā rather than hazl, but there is no doubt that there are coarse and anti-ethical meanings in hazl, and in this respect the author's definition is right.

The derivative terms from hazl are: hāzil, the person who makes jokes and utters bitter irony, and sarcasm in coarse language; hazzāl, the man who does the same thing habitually, in other words, a man addicted to hazl; and finally hazliyāt, the plural of hazliya, which means both facetious and laughable sayings. There are two other terms which Sanā'i of Ghazna has used, i.e. hazl niush, the person who

1. Kh. Tabrizi, Burhān; Farhang-i Mū'in.

2. Ta'rifāt, p. 184.

3. Dihkhudā, Lughat-nāma, under "hazl".

listens and fancies jokes and playful sayings, and hazl furush¹, the person who sells jokes or facetious sayings or provides entertainment for the people by means of coarse and witty language.

However, the meaning which is not mentioned, and has probably been evaded by the class-conscious writers in Persian, Arabic and Turkish, is that the term hazl applies to those harsh and obscene writings and indecent jokes that the pretentious classes feel ashamed of mentioning or even hearing in public, but in which they indulge in private, in particular with the people of their own rank. 'Ubaid in particular used hazl in this meaning, in order to make fun of the social disorder and immorality of his age. It does not, however, follow that he was the only pioneer of this field, for, even the most pious writers and poets of Persian language could not afford not to use this language in their bitter attack against the corruption of their age. Most of them had little to do with hypocritical ascetism or false chastity; they could understand that although it is necessary to teach philosophy, religion and ethics and other serious branches of knowledge, it is necessary, too, sometimes to be witty and indulge in vulgarity and even to talk nonsensically. They believed like Aristotle that "one part of life is relaxation, and one aspect of this is entertaining conversation."² They do so to refresh their minds exhausted by the arid seriousness of their profession. These were frank people who would not tolerate fools gladly and reacted badly to the ponderous seriousness of the slow-witted; they were realists attempting to convey

1. Hadīqa, p. 686:

دل دوانگشت دین کند در گوش
دخود هست آن زمان گرانی گوش

دل عاقل چو گشت هزل نبوش
چون تبک رگشت هزل دروش

2. Ethics, p. 167.

in their writings the nature of man as he is in reality. They never tried to demonstrate only the good facets of human life neglecting the indecent ones; instead, they were eager to show that human beings are a mixture of good and bad — or normal and abnormal —, honesty and dishonesty, believing that anybody who makes an effort in representing the human beings in a heavenly manner, is either a hypocrite or unobservant. Among these can be counted a group of Arabic writers or poets such as Jāḥiẓ of Baṣra, and his famous opponent Ibn Qutaiba of Dīnawar; Abu al-Faraj Iṣfahānī; Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1063), the author of Tawq al-Ḥamāma; Rāghib of Iṣfahan; Qādī Tanūkhī (d. 384/994), the author of Nishwar al-Muhādara; Yāqūt Ḥamawī (d. 626/1228); and the Persians Nāṣir Khusraw, Anwarī, Sāna'ī, Khāqānī, Aṭṭār, Rūmī, Sa'dī, Sūzanī, Ḥāfiẓ, 'Ubaid, Jāmī, Qā'ānī, Yaghmā of Jandaq and many others.

This point is well illustrated in the following quotations:

"There are a pack of people," writes Jāḥiẓ, "who when hearing the names of genital organs and copulation, abstain pretending that they wish to be far from moral pollution following the path of abstemiousness. But if you observe any of them carefully, you will find out that they possess little chastity, greatness, nobility and dignity except to a superficial extent."¹

Ibn Qutayba writes in the same manner,

When the names of sexual organs, or an indecent act are mentioned in your presence, do not be outraged nor abstain from speaking to the people or turn away

1. al-Haywān, Vol.II, p. 40:

«الوقار المتكلف :- وَبَعْضُ النَّاسِ إِذَا أَتَتْهُ إِلَى ذِكْرِ الْحِرِّ وَالْأُنْثَى وَالنِّكَاحِ أَرْبَعٌ وَاطْمَحَ التَّقَرُّزُ وَاسْتَحْلَ بَابُ التَّوَجُّعِ . وَالتَّوَجُّعُ مَنْ تَجَدَّ كَذَا لَكَ فَأَيْنَا قَوْرَجُلٌ كَسِيَتْ مَعَهُ مِنَ الْعِيفَةِ وَالْكَرَمِ وَالنَّبْلِ وَالْوَقَارِ إِلَّا بِقَدْرِ هَذَا الشَّكْلِ مِنَ التَّصْنَعِ .»

displaying humility, for the names of the organs cause no sin, in fact, the sin is caused by the act of insulting people, talking untruly, lying and backbiting. But by saying so I do not mean to give you permission to use them constantly in your speeches. I permit you only to indicate it in an anecdote or in a tradition ..., and again I stress that you should be content to utter a little according to the tradition of our honoured forebears (salaf-i sālih), for they felt free and behaved naturally careful not to play the hypocrite or act superficially. 1

‘Abd al-Qādir Jurjānī (d. 471/1078) writes:

The learned men, in order to make the Koran and its difficult or strange words and its pronunciation (irāb) fathomable, have inserted in their writings words and couplets in which are mentioned many abuses and obscene actions, and nobody has censured them, because their intention in reproducing them was not for the sake of insult or nonsense, and neither have they quoted them for the sake of poetry itself. 2

From the above passages it can be understood that the very mention of sexual organs and actions, and other so-called shameful things have no harm either from the point of view of religion or nature. At any rate, the writings of great Persian poets and writers are full of this kind of obscene language while no one would doubt for a moment their being true believers. Sanā’ī, in his Qalandariyāt³ poetry, mentions

1. ‘Uyūn, vol. I, p. 3-4: « وَإِذَا مَرَّ بِكَ حَدِيثٌ فِيهِ إِفْصَاحٌ بِذِكْرِ عَوْرَةٍ أَوْ فَرْجٍ أَوْ وَصْفٍ فَاحْشَةٍ، فَلَا يَحْمِلُكَ الْخُشْيُوعُ أَوْ التَّخَافُ عَلَى أَنْ تُصْعِرَ حَدِّكَ وَتُعْرِضَ بَوَهِمَكَ، فَإِنَّ أَسْمَاءَ الْأَعْضَاءِ لَا تُؤْتَمُّ، وَإِنَّمَا أَلْمَأُتَمُّ فِي سِتْمِ الْأَعْرَاضِ وَقَوْلِ الزُّورِ وَاللَّذْبِ وَآكُلِ لَحْمِ النَّاسِ بِالْغَيْبِ، وَلَمْ أَتَرْخَّصْ لَكَ فِي أَرْسَالِ اللِّسَانِ فِي الرَّفَثِ عَلَى أَنْ تَجْعَلَهُ هَجِيرًا كَ... »

2. Dalā’il al-I’jāz, pp. 32-3:

« وَقَدْ آسَنَشَيْدُ الْعُلَمَاءِ لِغَرِيبِ الْقُرْآنِ وَإِعْرَابِهِ بِالْأُبْيَاتِ فِيهَا الْفُحْشُ وَفِيهَا ذِكْرُ الْفِعْلِ الْقَبِيحِ. ثُمَّ لَمْ يَعْجَبْهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَحَدٌ إِذَا كَانُوا لَمْ يَقْصُدُوا إِلَى ذَلِكَ الْفُحْشِ... وَلَمْ يَرْوُوا الشَّعْرَ مِنْ أَجْلِهِ. »

3. Hadīqa, pp. 689-750.

almost all the sexual organs of men and women and assigns them to the hypocritical politicians, religious leaders, dishonest mystics and gluttonous or homosexual nobility of the age arguing that his own time was the age of shamelessness and immodesty and anyone who attempted to behave honestly is to be mocked by these people, and he cannot afford to be happy and joyful.¹ Mawlawī did the same in satirizing the rigour of the religious authorities, the corruption and the absurdity of the age; furthermore, he was able to explain every complex philosophical, ethical and mystical discussions by means of these so-called indecent anecdotes and proverbs -- which would, at first sight, seem unworthy of a great mystic. There are a total of 126 such indecent examples in his Mathnawī and other works.²

Hazl, therefore, is, irrespective of witticism, laughing and making others laugh, a kind of writing which is transparently shameful; the writer or poet uses the names and actions of sexual organs in it probably to strengthen his satire or criticism, and the Persian writers and poets did not feel ashamed of using them.

2. Hajw, Hijā', Tahjā'. These are three alternative maṣḍars of H-J-W, which literary means, "to find fault with", "to blame or reproach someone by numerating his offences or defects", and finally, "to insult somebody in verse or prose."³ It is, however, in the terms of Arabic, and in particular Persian literary men, "a sort of lyric poetry which

1. Hadīqa, p. 742:

نوبتِ شوخی و کم آزر می هست
خاصه با آنکه خاصه خرد هست
خرم و دمان تو کی باستی؟

ایها الناس روز به شرمی هست
عادت و رسم روز به کار بدی هست
جز به رندی و جز به قلای شمی

2. See Mawlawī in Chapter II of this thesis.

3. Ibn Manẓūr, Lisān al-'Arab; Dihkhuda, Lughatnāma.

is based on a painful and bitter critique, although this critique urges an insult and coarse mockery."¹

The following are the derivatives and compound words of this term in Persian: hajw kardan (to satirize); hajw guftan (to satirize); hajw khāndan (to recite satire); hajw nāma (a book of satire); hajwiyya (satirical poem or writing); hajwiyyāt (a collection of the latter). There are also some Arabic terms which are used in Persian as well: hāji (satirist); hajjā' (addicted to hajw); uhjiyya, uhjwa (pl. ahājī, satire, epigram); tahāji (the act of mutual satirizing) and finally muhājāt (mutual satirizing in which one is dominated and the other dominates).

It is worth noting that hijā' from the point of view of its strength or weakness, bitterness or softness has been divided into different categories. Ibn Bassām (d. 303/915) himself a satirist, divides hijā' into two sorts. The first he calls hijā' al-ashrāf, the satire of the nobles (or the satire of the high norm), and it is according to him,

a kind of satire in which there is apparently no bitter language or indecent words, rather its meaning is disturbing and painful. From the ancient times this sort of satire was adopted by the Arabs, and it has caused the destruction of families and the vagrancy of whole tribes. The poet usually used devices such as reprimand and sarcasm in a bitter manner but with less insult and apparent offence. The second type (which he did not mention by name, i.e. the hijā' al-arādhil, the satire of the humble or the satire of low norm) is not so destructive as the previous type, but the satirist usually employs harsh language and indecent words. 2

1. Jubrān Maḥmūd, al-Rā'id, p. 1552, under al-Hijā':

"الْهَجَاءُ غَرَضٌ مِنْ اقْرَاضِ الشَّعْرِ الْغَنَائِيِّ لِيَوْمٍ عَلَى لَقْدٍ لَا ذِخْرَ يَبْلُغُ حَدَّ الشَّيْءِ ثُمَّ أَحْيَانًا أَوْ عَلَى هَزْءٍ سَاخِرٍ شَدِيدٍ إِلَّا يَلُكَمُ."

2. Ḥusain al-Murṣafī, al-Wasīlat al-Adabiyya, vol. II, p. 82.

The satirist could provoke laughter in this second type of satire by making fun of his victim simply by mentioning his deficiencies.

A satire of the first kind is Ḥuṭay'a's poem on Zibriqān b. Badr:

Abandon splendours! travel not in search of them.
Be seated! for you're the person who should feed and
clothe himself. 1

Zibriqān, hearing this poem, came to 'Umar and complained of the libel. 'Umar summoned Ḥuṭay'ā, and asked him to explain. "I fathom no satire or insult in that," replied the poet, "and poetry and the understanding its subtleties is not a thing that the Prince of the Believers can comprehend. Therefore call Ḥassān b. Thābit and ask his judgement." 'Umar did so, and then Ḥassān heard the case and the poem. He commented, "He has not satirized Zibriqān, but armed himself against him." 'Umar smiled and dismissed them.²

Rāghib, after recording this event, mentions that Zibriqān turned to 'Umar and said, "Oh Caliph! he has stripped me of what grandeur I had built up."³ In Persian literature, the best example of this type of satire can be found in the muqaddama to Firdawsī's Shāhnāma. It concerns Sulṭān Maḥmūd of Ghazna and although bereft of a single word of insult, it is, nevertheless, one of the finest examples of Persian satire which overshadowed Maḥmūd's splendour and sovereignty.⁴

1. Rāghib, Muḥāḍarāt, vol. II, p. 447; Baihaqī, Tarikh Mas'ūdi, p. 308. The poem is as follows:
دَعِ الْكَأْرِمَ لَا تَرْحَلْ لِبُعَيْتِهَا فاقعد فإِنَّكَ انت الطَّامِعُ الْكَأْمِي

2. Baihaqī, Tārīkh, p. 309.

3. Muḥāḍrāt, vol. II, p. 447:

”يا مِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِنَّهُ عَرَّانِي عَمَّا أَبْنَيْتَهُ مِنَ الْعَالِي

4. See Muntakhab-i Shāhnāma, pp. 17-19.

If it be difficult in Persian and Arabic to distinguish between satire and other types of critical literature uttered in coarse language, yet the case remains so with Western literature as has been mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Satire is a word used in various senses: the original meaning in English and other languages is a literary work of special kind, "in which vice, follies, stupidities, abuses, etc., are held up to ridicule and contempt." (Webster's New World Dictionary). A second, and perhaps more subtle and modern meaning is, "the employment in speaking or writing, of sarcasm, or deriding vice, folly, abuses or evil of any kind" (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary).

It has to be known that satire is not the greatest type of literature. It cannot, despite the ambitious claims of one of its masters (Juvenal), rival tragic drama and epic poetry.¹ But still it is one of the most original, challenging and memorable forms. It has been practiced by some energetic minds -- Voltaire, Rabelais, Swift, Pope, Horace, Aristophanes; and occasionally by some great geniuses like Goethe and Shakespeare. The satirist is aware of the paradox, for instance, formulated by Sophocles or Racine, by which the best and noblest among us is destined for hopeless defeat, for martyrdom or crown. Here the satirists become of two types: the misanthropic satirist looks at life, and finds it neither tragic, nor comic, but ridiculously contemptible and nauseatingly hateful. He is a pessimist. His vision determines to life his mission; while the philanthropic has a kinder approach, he persuades rather than denounces. He is an optimist. It is as if optimist writes in order to heal, the pessimist

1. Juvenal, The Sixteen Satires, pp. 61, 1, 51-57.

in order to punish. One resembles a physician, the other an executioner. However, it would be unwise to place satirists simply into two groups, the white and black, for they are willful and independent — or at least they pretend so. Satura is variety¹; a single author is capable of writing one satire as an optimist, and following it by another marked by the bitterest pessimism. In Persian satire, the fittest exponent of this variety is 'Ubaid, and indeed perhaps all satirists-poets who mastered the techniques are marked by this characteristic. Even Juvenal, who is perhaps the coarsest and the most pessimistic of all Roman satirists, is no exception, for even in his satires we can observe laughter and happy elements.² Anwarī, Sūzanī, Ḥāfiẓ are counted among the varying masters in the field of Persian satire.

The case, however, is not the same with the philosopher-satirists. Their philosophical systems are either pessimistic or optimistic: Abū al-'Alā' of Marra (d. 449/1057), Khayyām of Nīshābūr (ca. 519/1125) and Schopenhauer of Germany (1788-1860) are all pessimists. They themselves do not laugh, nor do they evoke laughter. They launch bitter irony and coarse satire in whatever they find incompatible to their system of thinking which they have already built. For Schopenhauer the lives of all human beings are nothing but "a tragic farce" and at the same time "blind will and suffering".³ For Abu al-'Alā', "the whole progeny of Ādam are corrupted and bastards."⁴ Khayyām, the

1. See pp. 2-3 of this chapter.

2. In his Sixteen Satires, the Eighth Satire, pp. 177-194, is an obvious example for this claim. See also, G. Highet, Juvenal the Satirist, pp. 113-121.

3. A. Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Representation, vol. II, pp. 573-588, Chapter XLVI, "On the Vanity and Suffering of Life".

4. Dīwān, vol. II, p. 169:

وَتَزْوِجُهُ بِنْتَهُ بِأَبْنَتِهِ بِالْخَلَا
وَأَنَّ جَمِيعَ النَّاسِ مِنْ غَضْرِ الزَّوْجِ

إِذَا مَا ذَكَرْنَا آدَمَ وَفِئَالَهُ
عَلَيْتُنَا بِأَنَّ النَّاسَ مِنْ نَسْلِ سَقِ

best-known in the West for his quatrains, can be distinguished, even in his poetry, for his constancy of thought, and pessimism is its permanent characteristic. If there is any satire in his poetry, then it is unvarying; his critique of folly and superstition is frank and constant. He believes that if he were allowed to choose as to whether he would have liked to come into this world or not, he would have preferred not; but while he has been brought into it unwillingly, and as "this life is preceded by sorrow and suffering", it is better to be spent in intoxication and sleep."¹ There is no laughter or gaiety in his satire, "there is a bull in the sky and its name is Parwin (thawr in Arabic, a bull), there is another beneath the earth. Now, if you observe deeply, you will see between these two bulls a pack of donkeys."²

This coarse language is used by Anwarī, Sūzanī, Sa'dī, 'Ubaid and Ḥāfiẓ; but the tone of satirizing varies between the two poles of pessimism and optimism: like the wasp they sting and fly on. At any rate, there is attractive, constructive and delightful elements in satire on the one hand, and painful, destructive and hateful ones on the other: it is a mixture of the appealing and the ^aappling.

1. Rūba'iyāt, pp. 114 and 91:

گر آمدنم بخود ندی — نامدی — در نرسیدن بمن ندی کی شدی
 به زمان ندی که اندر این در خراب — نامدی — نه شدی نه ندی
 عمرت تا کی بخود برستی گذرد * یا در پی نیستی دهستی گذرد
 می نوش که عمری که اجل در پی آید * آن به که بجواب نمانی گذرد

2. Ibid., p. 107:

گادی است در آسمان و دانش برین — که گادی و دگر نهفته در زیر زمین
 چشم جز در گشت و از روی یقین — زیر و زبر در گشت و منشی خربین

He refers to the ancient cosmological view according to which our globe is seated on a bull, and the bull on a fish. The star Parwin is also imagined as having the shape of a bull. See Sūrat al-Ard, pp. 17-19.

The Motives for Satire

It is not within the scope of this discussion to dwell at length on the motives of satire, since it is a vast topic in itself. It would, however, be useful to at least allude to these motives. It is recorded here and there both in Western and Eastern sources that one of the main motives of satire is a sense of personal inferiority, and in fact a noticeably large number of satirists have been impelled by a rankling feeling of personal inferiority, of social injustice, poverty and exclusion from a privileged group. As for the Western one, "Menippus", relates Highet,

was a slave. Bion's father was a slave, and he himself was sold in slavery. Horace's father was a slave, although Horace himself was born free. Pope and Dryden were both Roman Catholics in a Protestant country. Lucian was a Greek-speaking Syrian. Swift and Joyce were Anglo-Irishmen. Byron, Orwell, and Waugh Anglo-Scots. (Byron, though he called himself an "English Bard", was brought up in Scotland speaking broad Scots. George Orwell's real name was Eric Blair: his family background was Scottish and he spent his last years in Scotland. Evelyn Waugh's father was an Edinburgh publisher; he also suffered from going to a not-very-good public school and a not-very-good Oxford college, and he is a Roman Catholic convert.) Pope was tiny and painfully deformed. Boileau was nervous and sickly. Cervantes, Gogol and Parini were all men of talent forced into careers which they felt to be useless or degrading. 1

Voltaire was ugly and tiny. The skin of his hands and face was so coarse and wrinkled that people used to liken them to leather, as if they stretched on bone. The Academy of Science refused his application to its membership arguing that he was not academically educated enough, although later on he was elected with great acclaims.² The

1.G.Highet, The Anatomy of Satire, p. 240.

2.C.E. Vulliamy, Voltaire, pp. 47-49.

case was the same in the East, in particular in the Islamic world.

Jāhiz was deformed, and according to one of his servants was accustomed to satirizing God, for he used to look at the mirror saying, "Praise be to God who created me. And what a good job with my creation!"¹ He

was called both Jāhiz and Hadaqī because of his indecently protruding eyes.² In his old age, a part of his body was completely paralyzed,

and as he himself said, "If they cut a part of my body I would not feel anything, but if a fly flies close to another part it torments

me."³ Bashshār b. Burd was blind, short and deformed. Abū Nuwās was accused of many defects: heresy, homosexuality and being of a non-Arab

descent were among them.⁴ Abu 'l-Faraj of Iṣfahān was both ugly and

dirty.⁵ Abu Ḥayyān al-Tawhīdī, with all qualities and knowledge, was forced to wander from court to court, although he was contemporary to

two great wazīrs who pretended patronage of talent: Ṣāhib b. 'Abbād and Ibn al-'Amīd, and as he himself writes, "very often was forced to

eat the vegetables of the desert to avoid starvation."⁶ Firdawsī was a debtor and could not provide food or coal for winter and was unable

1. Abshihī, al-Mustatraf, p. 241.

2. Kurd 'Alī, Umarā' al-Bayān, vol. II, p. 315:

« وَأُطْلِقَ عَلَى عَمْرٍو اسْمُ الْجَاهِظِ لِشَوْءٍ عَيْنِيهِ، وَيُقَالُ لَهُ الْكَدَقِيُّ لِذَلِكَ. وَكَانَ مُشَوِّمَ الْخَلْقَةِ: »

3. Ibid., p. 316; Yāqūt, Irshād, vol. VI, pp. 62-64.

4. Ibn Manẓūr, Akhbār Abī Nūwās, p. 141.

5. See Irshād, vol. V, p. 152:

« وَكَانَ أَبُو الْفَرَجِ الْأَصْفَهَانِيُّ صَاحِبَ كِتَابِ الْإِلْغَانِيِّ مِنْ نَدَاءِ الْوَزِيرِ أَبِي حُمَيْرٍ... وَكَانَ دِمَاءُ
وَسَيِّئًا قَدِيرًا لَمْ يَغْنَلْ ثَوْبًا لَهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قُطِعَ... وَكَانَ الْمُؤَلِّفِيُّ يَحْتَلُّ لَهُ ذَلِكَ لِمَوْضِعِهِ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ »

6. al-Imtā', pp. 141-2:

« وَلَقَدْ اضْطَرَّرْتُ بَيْنَهُمْ [أَي بَيْنَ مُعَاَصِرِي] بَعْدَ الشُّهُرَةِ وَالْمَعْرِفَةِ فِي أَدَمَاتٍ كَثِيرَةٍ إِلَى أَهْلِ الْخُضِرِ
فِي الصَّوَاءِ »

to kill a sheep for a whole year.¹ Sūzanī was poor and accused of homosexuality. 'Ubaid, too, was permanently in debt constantly seeking "a pure anus", that is to say an honest and generous man, in order to release him from the disaster of debt and creditors.²

This was the common motive. There are a few other motives worthy of mention:

Firstly, the satirist is always moved by personal hatred, or condescending amusement. Frequently, of course, he disclaims this and asserts that he has banished all personal feelings, that he is writing only for the public good. But he always has a rankling grudge, however well he tries to conceal it, or a twitch of contempt, however gracefully he turns it into a smile. The younger Pliny (c. A.D. 62-114) wrote, "On the death of Domitian" with characteristic candour, "I reflected that here was a signal and a glorious opportunity to punish guilt, to avenge misfortune and to bring oneself into notice."³

The reader of Juvenal's satires, too, cannot help but feel that their author (who may have been on bad terms with Pliny) envisaged an identical programme. Satire One, his manifesto, announces "indignation" as his driving motif, and the world at large as his subject-matter:

1. Shāhnāma, p. 9 (Introduction), and p. 549 text:

مرا مرگ بهر بُدی از تنگر گشت
بیت این بر آوزده صرخ بلند
نه چنری بدیدست تا جو درو
خفت آنکه دلش دارد بنوش
سرگوشندی تواند بُرید

لگرگ آمد ابل بر تن مرگ
در هیزم و گندم و گوسفند
نماندم نیک بود و گندم نه
هوا پر خروش و زمین پر زبوش
درم دارد و فل و نان و بنید

2. Kulliyāt, p. 80:

دائماً هفتش و هدم قرص
بوکه آرم بدست مرهم قرص
که مرا داز هاند از غم قرص

دای برین که روز و شب شده ام
مدتی بگر دهر کسی گشتم
کون درستی نیا فتم جایی

3. Juvenal, The Sixteen Satires, pp. 22-3.

All human endeavours, men's prayers,
Fears, angers, pleasures, joys and pursuits, these make
The mixed mash of my verse. 1

The same satire conveys again his firing anger clearer in the following canto:

Need I tell you how anger burns in my heart when I see
The bystanders jostled back by a mob of bravos
Whose master has first debauched his ward, and later
Defrauded the boy as well? The courts condemned him,
But the verdict was a farce. Who cares for reputation
If keeps his cash? A provincial governor, exiled
For extortion, boozes and feasts all day, basks cheerfully
In the wrathful eye of the Gods; it's still his province,
After winning the case against him, that feels the pinch.
Are not such themes well worthy of Horace's pen? Should I
Not attack them? 2

The similar anger and hatred can be observed in Persian satirists' prose and verse; but perhaps with more laughter and irony. Sanā'i writes for example:

O people! our age is the age of immodesty,
It is the turn of impudence and outrageousness,
Unless with roguery and libertinism
How you can be happy and joyful...3

In the same manner, "A libertine", relates 'Ubaid,

was disputing with his son thus, 'how many times must
I tell you that you do nothing worthwhile, and that
you waste your life in vain; how many times must I tell
you to learn the art of gymnastics, and learn how to

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1. Juvenal, The Sixteen Satires, p. 23 (of introduction) and the text, pp. 65, 66.
 2. Ibid., pp. 66-67.
 3. Hadīqa, p. 742:

نوبتِ لوتخی و کم آرز می هست خرم و شادمان تو کی باشی از قفادان و مضنه و دشنام	ایها الناس روزِ بشری هست جز به رندی و جز بقلا شنی قیمت و قدر و جاه این ایام
--	---

make a dog jump through a hoop, and the art of skipping, in order to enjoy your life. If you do not take my advice, I'll exile you to the corner of a seminary to learn the scholars' damnable sciences and become a learned man, and as long as you live, you will be left in abjectness, misery and adversity, earning not even a mouthful anywhere. 1

The second motive is openly avowed by many satirists. They wish to stigmatize crime and ridicule folly, and thus to aid in diminishing or if possible removing it. "The true end of satire", writes Dryden, "is the amendment of vices by correction." He then goes on to say that the frank satirist "is no more an enemy to the offender than the physician is an enemy to his patient, when he prescribes harsh remedies to inveterate disease", in order to make surgery unnecessary.²

This point may not be entirely true, but one cannot claim that all satirists by nature are vicious and misanthropic: they anger ^{ily denounce} and then pity people's ignorance and condemn authorities for their imposture and evil-doing on the one hand; while they wish to release people from their misery, and punish the demagogues on the other. Thus, even Juvenal, the coarsest satirist of Roman ages, whispers kindly in the ears of people, "If you have the leisure to listen calmly and reasonably I will enlighten you."³ Persian satirists frequently say, "My facetious sayings are nothing but teaching." (Sanā'ī); "Listen to satire seriously, its playfulness does not deceive you." (Mawlawī); "Do not despise satires and satirists", or "Do not be vexed of beggars' abuses, the poets' and buffoons' tongues." ('Ubaīd). They all mean that the hard and indecent language of satirists should not mislead innocent people,

1. Kulliyāt, p. 115.

2. Dryden, preface "To the Reader", Absalom and Achitopel (First Part), p. 189 (The Poems and Fables of John Dryden, Oxford University Press, 1978).

3. The Sixteen Satires, Satire One, p. 65.

and causes no harm to morality and honesty; its butt is either those who commit crimes intentionally, or those fools who suppose themselves men of importance or merit.

Aesthetics, in a strange way, is the third motive. Any writer or artist feels pleasure in making his own special patterns by manipulating his chosen material. The patterns of satire, however, are both interesting and complicated, and any writer who tried to use them must be attracted by their difficulties. There is no doubt that the aesthetics of satire are different from what we understand in drama or epic poetry, but still there is perhaps no objection that a satirical writer needs a huge vocabulary, a lively flow of humour combined with a strong serious point of view, an imagination so brisk that it will always be several steps ahead of his readers, and taste good enough to allow him to say shocking things without causing the reader to turn away in disdain. The satirist, like a serious writer or painter, tries his best to write or paint a real picture of his age — without any reservation of a historian or moralist —, and hangs it, like them, on a wall, forcing us to notice them. This needs an aesthetical talent which is no less than serious artistry.

The fourth and perhaps the least well-known motive is idealistic. At first sight it seems not operative for all satirists; and at any rate the pessimistic satirists will not admit to it, the jokers seldom think about it, but the fact is that even the most misanthropic of satirists are visionary: they give positive advice, they set up an exemplar to copy; they state an ideal. Juvenal, who in many ways has much in common with 'Ubaid, in his fifth¹ satire describes " a dependent's

1. The Sixteen Satires, pp. 117-123.

dinner in a great nobleman's house: a hideous evening, bad food, worse wine, deliberate humiliations. No moral is drawn, except that it would be better in the streets."¹ But in his eleventh satire, after a short introduction on the absurdities of Roman gourmandise, he invites a friend to a quiet dinner in his own home, his ideal, and then describes the modest but tasteful menu.² Yes! when a satirist criticizes the available facts among a group, or in a society, he is looking for a peaceful, idealistic one in a morality in which generosity and tolerance, and, in short, humanity governs. The whole treatise of the Akhlāq al-Ashrāf of 'Ubaid is a vivid example of this hidden inclination. He satirizes, curses, mocks and derides the nobles, directly and indirectly, because they pay no heed to his favourite morals. This fact is discussed fully in "'Ubaid's Topics of Satires". In a nutshell, all satirists are at heart idealists.

Techniques of Satire

If the most important aspect of satire is its subject-matter — be it politics, sexual relation, bad manners, personal absurdity or literary pomposity — what sets it apart from other types of literary genres is its approach to the subject. The satirist, of course, uses a wide variety of literary forms, but nonetheless he is bound to use only a fairly limited range of techniques. Although its contents often deal with the harshest realities of human existence, satire is meant simply to make us laugh or smile. This, however, raises the question of what constitutes laughter. Many attempts have been made to define

1. G. Highet, Juvenal the Satirist, Chapter XI, Satire Five, pp. 83-4.

2. The Sixteen Satires, pp. 239-43.

it, but it seems that ^{it is} still wrapped in obscurity. Persian scholars have generally held that the "human being laughs, because he is surprised"¹, but this makes the matter more complicated, for one may then ask why he should laugh when surprised and not weep? Literary critics are not helped by the psychologists. "Laughter," they would suggest, "is a set of physical symptoms — spasmodic guffaws, shaking of abdominal muscles; even weeping or in extreme cases loss of bladder control."² But the cause of these symptoms is, however, obscure and complex. Another explanation is that "laughter is one of the body's ways of ridding itself of superfluous energy."³ There is another definition in an Arabic medical book which runs as follows:

Laughter is (the result of) the boiling of the natural blood (which happens) when a human being sees or hears something that diverts him and thus startles and moves him. If then, he does not employ his ability to think in connection with it, he is seized by laughter. 4

This definition introduces some points which are connected with the definition which has come down to us from the Peripatetics in which they defined man as "a laughing animal".⁵

One of the best studies on this matter in the present century is Henri Bergson's treatise, in which he tries to explain the "meaning of comic" in general. "The first point," he writes,

to which attention should be called is that the comic does not exist outside the pale of what is strictly human. A landscape may be beautiful, charming and sublime, or insignificant and ugly; it will never be laughable. You may laugh at an animal, but only

1. Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī, Sharḥ al-Risalat al-Shamsiya, p. 11.

2. M. Hadgart, Satire, p. 108.

3. Ibid., p. 109.

4. F. Rosenthal, Humor in Early Islam, p. 132.

5. «الإنسان حيوانٌ ناطقٌ»

because you have detected in it some human attitude or expression. You may laugh at a hat, but what you are making fun of, in this case, is not the piece of felt or straw, but the shape that men have given it, — the human caprice whose mould it has assumed. It is strange that so important a fact, and such a simple one too, has not attracted, to a greater degree the attention of philosophers. Several have defined man as "an animal which laughs". They might equally have defined him as an animal which is laughed at; for if any other animal, or some lifeless object produces the same effect, it is always because of some resemblance to man, of the stamp he gives it or the use he puts it to. 1

The nature of this present study does not allow us to dwell further on this matter, but whatever the nature of laughter may be, the aim of satirist is to make us laugh, and the famous Arabian satirist Jarīr (d. 110/728) has said, "When you write satire, you must make people laugh."² In order to make people laugh satirists use several techniques, and it appears that before giving the list of satirical and critical terms in the Persian and Arabic languages, it is fitting to discuss a few of them.

1. Reduction (Tahqīr-i Sha'n). Reduction or degradation is the first technique of satire. This is the device for belittling or cutting down the position of the satirized person. Here the satirist tries to reduce his victim by removing from him all the supports of rank and status. In this field, as far as English satire is concerned, probably no one can match Swift (1667-1745) or even dares to imitate him. A very penetrating factor of reduction is the removal of the victim's clothes to show that there is nothing underneath all his gorgeous robes

1. Laughter, pp. 3-4.

2. Mursafī, Wasila, p. 82; Ibn Rashīq, al-'Umda, p. 172:

”وَكَانَ يَقُولُ [أَي جَرِيرٌ] إِذَا هَجَوْتُمْ فَأَضْحَكُوا.”

except an ordinary and mortal body. Swift, in one of his early works, A Tale of a Tub¹, first satirizes the self-indulgent "modern minds", and here, of course, "modern" relates to the famous quarrel of Ancients and Moderns of seventeenth century England and France, and means more than merely "contemporary". For Swift it comprehends all those who, since the passing of the great age of Classical Rome, have moved away from the standards of integrity, humanity, intelligence, and moral values, which the best of the ancients might be thought to embody in their literature and their philosophy.² But the important point of this satire is to expose the fact that the three forms of Christianity—Catholic, Anglican and Puritan — were acting as brothers contesting for a suit of clothes left them by their father. This suit was the Gospel, and according to Swift, Martin (Luther) is least bad, because he saw, at least, the degeneration of his brothers and himself, and returned as closely as he could to the primitive purity. Peter, the Catholic, remained unregenerate, while the dissenter, Jack (Calvin), undertook such radical reforms that the very fabric of his inherited coat — Christianity — was damaged. It seems at first sight, that Swift defends Martin against Jack and Peter, but the result of his brilliant wit is to discredit all forms of dogmatic Christianity by attempting to make them naked of all non-original and borrowed clothes.³

It is worth mentioning here that satire, although dealing with the idea of nakedness, has nothing to do with nudity. The nude is the idealised human body, both erotic and heroic in the noble tradition begun by the Greeks. The naked, on the other hand, means undressing

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1. See A Tale of a Tub and Other Satires (London-New York, 1975 ed., with an Introduction by Kathleen Williams).
 2. Ibid. (Introduction), p. xxv, and the text, section VI in particular.
 3. Ibid., pp. 121-135.

in a wholly inappropriate context, "the naked man is caught with his trousers down, caught in the act of guilt or shame." Our first parents, Adam and Eve according to the heavenly books were in the pre-fallen state glorious nudes: after eating the prohibited apple they became aware that they were simply naked, and in their embarrassment tried to conceal their parts with fig-leaves -- the first victims of divine satire!"¹

No doubt this is a literary allegory but in satire the satirist exploits its full potentiality in order to make his victim undressed and expose him naked. Sa'dī, for instance, writes, "I saw a fat fool who had worn a precious robe, mounted on an Arabian horse, Egyptian turban on his head. A person asked me, 'O Sa'dī! What do you think about this illuminated brocade worn by this ignorant animal?' 'A donkey has become like a man, just as a golden calf has got the voice of a cow,' I retorted." He continues his reductive style in the two following couplets:

One cannot say that this animal resembles a human,
Except for his cloak, turban and outer appearance,
Seek all his assets, possessions and appliances
Nothing would appear to you lawful but his blood. 2

For Sa'dī and according to the idealistic ethics which the satirist defends,

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1. For more detail, see K. Clark, The Nude (New York, 1956). The above quotation is quoted from pp. 122 and 356 of this book.
 2. Kulliyāt, Gulistān, p. 72:

« ابله‌ی را دیدم ستمین خلعتی تهرین در بر » و مرکبی تازی در زیر و قصبی بر سر. کسی گفت
 « سعدی، چگونه می بینی این دیبای مُفتم بر این حیوان لا اعلیم؟ » گفتم:
 قد تشابه بالوتری جماراً عجللاً جسداً له خواراً
 به آدمی نتوان گفت مانند این حیوان مگر در آینه و دستار نقش بر آینه
 بگرد در همه اسباب و ملک و هستی آید که هیچ چیز نبینی محال جز نونش »

The human body is honourable because of the human soul,
 Otherwise, the decent robe is not the token of humanity
 If human beings are simply: eye, mouth, ear and nose
 What is the difference between the pictures on the wall and
 the human race? 1

Voltaire, in the same manner, asks,

Where are you going monsieur l'abbé? etc. Do you
 realise that abbé means father? If you become one
 you do a service to the state, you undoubtedly do the
 work a man can do: a thinkable being will be born to
 you. There is something divine in this act. But if
 you are monsieur l'abbé merely because you have been
 tonsured, and in order to wear a dog-collar and a short
 cloak, and to wait for a modest benefice, you do not
 deserve the name of abbé. 2

Sā'ib of Tabriz (d. 834/1430) writes:

If it was resolved that by wearing a turban, a man could
 boast of being knowledgeable,
 Then the Dome of the Shāh Mosque was more learned than
 anybody else! 3

Reduction is, at any rate, one of the most effective techniques of
 satire, and the stripping of the victim of all his conceits and
 pomposity, is its principle device.

2. Animalization.⁴ The second device or technique of the satirist
 is the creation of a comparison between his victim and an animal

1. Kulliyāt, Gulistān, p. 538.

تن آدمی شریف است بجان آدمیت نه همین لباس زیباست که آن آدمیت
 اگر کند می بچشم است و دهان و گوش و بینی چه میان نقش دیوار و میان آدمیت؟

2. Philosophical Dictionary, p. 15.

3. Dīwān, p. 193:

گر به عمامه کسی کوشِ فضیلت می زد گنبد مسجد شیخ از همه فاضلتر بود

4. I have used "animalization" rather loosely in the sense of
 presenting human beings as in the manner and sometimes in the
 shape of animals.

concerning their characteristics. The satirist reminds us that homo sapiens despite his vast spiritual aspirations is only a mammal that feeds, defecates, menstruates, ruts, gives birth and is subject to disease. But what about death? As we know, in satire mortality is usually kept just round the corner: the theme of death is best left to the literature of tragedy, lyric or stoic mediation. But apart from mortality, satire uses all the other attributes of the animal world. "The animal image," as Hodgart puts it, "is an essential device in the visual counterpart caricature and cartoon: it reduces man's purposeful actions, the ambitious aims of which he is proud and his lusts of which he is ashamed, all to the level of brute instinct: hog in sloth, fox in stealth,"¹ or as Rāghib quotes an unknown satirist blaming his victim's megalomania, "he was at the beginning a putrefied sperm, his ending will be a fetid carcass, and between these two the carrier of excrement."²

From the age of the ancients up to the present day we have an abundant treasure in this field, although variant in their coarseness of satire. Take for example the Indian origin of Kalīla wa Dimna, that is, Panchatantra, Aesop's Fables, Aristophanes' plays, in particular Birds and Wasps, Reynard the Fox³, Anatole France's Penguin Island, George Orwell's Animal Farm (1945) in the West; the Arabic text of Panchatantara by Ibn al-Muqaffa', and its Persian translation by Naṣr-allāh Munshī, Warāwini's Marzbān Nāma, a group of Rūmī's anecdotes in

1. M. Hodgart, Satire, pp. 118-119.

2. Muhādarāt, vol. I, p. 261: «أَوَّلُكَ نُظْفَةٌ مَذْرُوءَةٌ وَآخِرُكَ جَيْفَةٌ قَذِرَةٌ، وَأَنْتَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ حَامِلٌ عَذْرَةٌ.»

3. There is an edition of Caxton's English translation of Reynard the Fox by D.B. Sanas (Cambridge, 1960).

Mathnawī, 'Ubaid's Mush u Gurba, and finally some excellent qita's by poetess Parwin I'tiṣāmī (d. 1957) in Persia, all are full of different kinds of tales and anecdotes which have been uttered by diverse types of animals in order to present various characteristics of the brutal facets of human beings. Another example of this device has been previously quoted, concerning Zibriqān b. Badr, in which the poet Ḥuṭay'a had compared his victim's style of living to the animal who simply feeds, drinks and defecates. This is surely a lively instance of this kind of satire.

3. Qalb , or Metamorphosis. This technique which consists of inversion of personalities and objects, is one of the basic devices of satire, in which the satirist changes the form and structure of a certain object or person or word. Ovid (43 B.C. - A.D.17) was among the most sophisticated and perhaps the first best known metaphorsis writer. His Metamorphoses, a poem in fifteen books, is a fresh, charming collection of tales. The main theme is transformation: of chaos changed into harmony, of animals turned into stone, of men and women who become trees or stars. The whole of Western European literature has derived inspiration from it.¹ Before going any further, it must be stated that satire was regarded as an occupation, like any other profession, and there were many persons in the Islamic world who engaged in satire in order to make a livelihood. Abu 'l-'Ibar al-Hāshimī (d. 250/864) the poet and professional satirist relates that he and a group of others who were interested in satire used to attend a learning circle in which a teacher instructed them that the first device of

1. See Ovid, Metamorphoses, tr. and with an Introduction by Mary M. Innes (London, 1955).

satire is to learn how to invert the objects and their names. "In the morning, thus, when we saw each other," he recounts,

we used to say 'good evening', while in the evening we would say 'good morning.' When one of us said, 'Come near,' we retreated. This teacher used to copy a book throughout a year and sell it. He told me once, 'Now, I have finished the book, you should pour some dust on it to dry its ink,' and then he gave the book to me. I poured water on it and as a result ruined the text. 'What did you do?' the teacher shouted at me cursing. 'What have you taught us throughout the year?' I replied. 'For God's sake, go!' he retorted, 'because you are the master of the masters in this profession.' 1

This type of inversion prevailed both in Arabic and Persian satire.

It is recorded that when Zamakhsharī (467-538/1074-1143), the famous Koranic exegetist saw the celebrated work, the Majma' al-Amthāl by Maydānī of Nishāpūr (d. 518/1124), he was shocked by envy and took a pen with which he added a nūn to the beginning of the author's name, changing it to Namidānī, which in Persian means: "You do not know", or "you are ignorant". Maydānī too, hearing of the envious scholar's conduct, took one of Zamakhsharī's books and changed the mīm, that is the second letter, to nūn and made it Zankhasharī, which simply means "the cuckold."²

Another sort of qalb or inversion is the English parody, which is one of the basic devices of satirical literature. It means principally two things: one is the reproduction of "a passage from an

1. Farrāj, Akhbār Juhā, p. 37.

2. Yāqūt, Irshād, vol. II, p. 108:

« وَسَمِعْتُ أَنَّ الْمِيدَانِيَّ لَمَّا صَنَّفَ كِتَابَ الْجَامِعِ فِي الْأَمْثَالِ وَقَفَ عَلَيْهِ ابْنُ الْقَاسِمِ الرَّمَخَشَرِيُّ فَحَسَدَهُ عَلَى جَوْدَةِ تَصْنِيفِهِ وَأَخَذَ الْقَلَمَ وَزَادَ فِي لَفْظِ الْمِيدَانِيَّ نُونًا فَصَارَ الْمِيدَانِيَّ، وَمَعْنَاهُ بِالْفَارِسِيَّةِ الَّذِي لَا يَعْرِفُ شَيْئًا. فَلَمَّا وَقَفَ الْمِيدَانِيَّ عَلَى ذَلِكَ أَخَذَ بَعْضَ تَصَانِيفِ الرَّمَخَشَرِيِّ فَصَيَّرَ مِيمَ نِسْبَتِهِ نُونًا وَغَيَّرَ تَرْتِيبَ الْحُرُوفِ فِي الْخَاءِ وَالشَّيْنِ فَصَارَ الرَّمَخَشَرِيُّ، مَعْنَاهُ بَائِعُ زَوْجَتِهِ » (؟).

author and applying it to a comic, humble, or otherwise inappropriate subject; the other, reproducing the general style and thought of an author while exaggerating his salient characteristics, and not necessarily quoting any passage verbatim."¹ The earliest available literary parodies are those in Aristophanes' The Frogs², where he burlesques the style of Aeschylus and Euripides. In English the genre begins with Chaucer's "Sir Thopas", which parodies the popular "romance" of the fourteenth century.³ It is in fact of great importance to mention that parody is not always used with malicious intention, for it may emerge from the sheer joy of travesty. Aristophanes sometimes parodies in this manner, that is he was addicted or fond of parody by nature to a great degree.⁴ Of Persian parodists, Sūzānī, Anwarī and Yaghmā of Jandaq are the archetypes of this manner. Anwarī claims repeatedly, "I have no friend or enemy in my satire."⁵

There are good parodists among both the Arabs and Persians.

Aḥmad b. Ja'far Barmaki (224-324/838-935), known as Jahḡa, could be counted among the greatest of Arabic parodists; he took the heroic poetry of his predecessors and wrote verses in which he parodied their

1. F.J. Lelièvre, in his useful article called "The Basis of Ancient Parody", in Greece and Rome, I (London, 1954), pp. 66-67.
2. See The Wasps, The Poet and the Women, The Frogs, pp. 142-212.
3. See Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales, pp. 194-202, "The Tale of Sir Topaz".
4. "Aristophanes," writes Voltaire, "(whom the commentators admire because he was a Greek, forgetting that Socrates also was a Greek) was the first who accustomed the Greeks to regard Socrates as an atheist. This comic poet, who was neither comic nor a poet, would not have been allowed in our society to write farces for the fair of Saint-Laurent: he appears to me to be lower and more contemptible than Plutarch [in his parallel between Aristophanes and Menander] depicts him." It is probable that Voltaire is criticizing his waywardness and spontaneous sense of travesty by which he depicts Socrates as an atheist and a sophist. See Philosophical Dictionary, p. 49.
5. Diwān, p. 373: "دشمن دوست نیست هجو مرا ز آنکه او هر دو را یکی شمرده!"

heroic meaning changing them to the topics of food and drinks, while keeping the same form and style of the original.¹ In Persian Abu Ishāq Hallāj of Shiraz, known as Bushāq Aṭi'ma (d. 827/1424) parodied many poets including Sa'dī, Ḥāfiẓ and Shāh Ni'matallāh Walī (d. 834/1430). The following is one example of his parodies. Ḥāfiẓ wrote:

آنان که خاک را بنظر کیمیا کنند آیا بُود که گوشتِ حشی با کنند
مستوق چون نقاب ز رخ بر نمی کشد هر کس حکایتی بتصور چرا کنند؟

Those who are able to convert the dust to gold,
Would they put on us a kindly glance,
While the Beloved is not willing to reveal himself
Why everybody narrates a tale in accordance with his own
imagination? 2

Bushāq parodied it as follows:

کیا پزان سحر که سر کله دالند آیا بُود که گوشتِ حشی با کنند؟
چون از درون خربزه آگه نشد کسی هر کس حکایتی بتصور چرا کنند؟

When the kīpā-pazām open the door of the cooking-pot
Would they put on us a kindly glance

While no one knows the secret hidden in the melon's
skin

Why everybody narrates a tale in accordance with his own
imagination? 3

Another parodist, Niẓām al-Dīn Maḥmūd Qārī of Yazd, chose the subject of clothes (albisa) as his topic following Bushāq's line of parody. Both parodists' writings have been published in Iran, i.e. Bushāq's Dīwān Aṭi'ma and Qārī's Dīwān Albisa, but none has caught the attention of the men of letters, as though "food and humour" were considered unworthy to dwell under the roof of Persian literature.⁴ It is doubtful if one would say that Bushāq was guided by gastronomy

1. Irshād, vol. I, pp. 383-405.

2. Dīwān, p. 132, gh. 196.

3. Dīwān Aṭi'ma, p. 74. Kīpā, is a sheep or goat's ventricle stuffed with minced meat and rice; and the cook of such a pudding is a kīpā paz.

4. Rypka, History of Iranian Literature, p. 273.

alone and in the case of Qārī the praise of cotton and wool. His mock-heroic account of the war between wool and linen (Jang-nāma mu'in u kattān) has probably a political significance. Bushāq's own work "is a protest", as Rypka puts it rightly, "against the colourless species of Persian poetry prevalent at the time."¹ But its significance lies deeper: Bushāq seemingly makes fun of the lofty character of classical literature together with the high-flown flattery of the rulers, and the never-ending contemplation.

But more important than of these parodists was their predecessor 'Ubaid Zākānī, whose parody is clear-cut and obviously sharper than other works identifiable as such in the strict meaning of the term. He has parodied a heroic section of the epic lines Shāhnāma², along side with work of other Persian poets such as Rudakī, Abū Shakūr. Balkhī, Khayyām of Nishāpur, and, in particular, Sa'di, whose poetry and prose was the symbol of moral codes in Persia.

4. To pretend the fool, "tahāmuq". This is another technique of both Arabic and Persian satire: to act foolishly or to denounce the foolishness of people and their foolish creeds by way of follies. No doubt foolishness in itself is cause of nonsense or idle talking, but most of the satirists who employed this technique were not fools, rather they were a few steps ahead of their peers in wisdom; they were abler than ordinary people of their age in recognising the illnesses of their society, but they "had come to the conclusion", too, "that abuses, follies often entail a very good result."³ Our laughter at fools in general does not last very long, and if we laugh at such

1. Rypka, History of Iranian Literature, p. 274.

2. See p.242 of Chapter V of this thesis.

3. Voltaire, The Vision of Babouc, p. 20.

people, it is by way of feeling pity and sympathy for them, and in the end we realise that our laughter was because of their simple-mindedness and unmeasured actions; but tahāmuq is another matter, it arises because we cannot directly criticize a person or a group, and we therefore burst into laughter by way of folly and mockery in order to launch a counter-attack on their folly. Buhlūl, Juhi (Juhā), Abu Bakr Rubābi and Talkhak, who were known among Iranians as fools, were in fact clever people, pretending foolishness. These Persian hero-wits bear strong resemblance to the Turkish Naṣr al-Dīn Khoja, the German Till Eulenspiegel, the English Joe Miller, the Italian Bertoldo, the Russian Balakirew, etc.¹

An investigation of the biographies of the well-known fools in the Islamic countries will reveal those personalities who exercised folly in order to earn a livelihood; they above all were in a position to observe that it was the fool who enjoyed a prosperous life. "It is said," relates Farrāj, "that a person once blamed Ḥamdunī, the poet, for being occupied with folly. He replied that it was this kind of foolishness which made his life easy, and in this respect it was much more useful than his intellect. Then he added:

They reproached me in ignorance for my displaying folly,
But my folly is more delightful and sweeter than their
sagacity.
My folly guarantees my family's life,
They would have died in humbleness if I had pursued intellectual
life." 2

1. Encyclopaedia of Islam, under "Naṣr al-Dīn Khodja".

2. Farrāj, Akhbār Juhā, p. 47, who quotes al-Ghurār wal-Urār, p. 133:

"عَذَلُونِي عَلَى الْحِمَاةِ جَهْلًا"
وَهِيَ مِنْ حَقْلِهِمُ الَّذِي وَأَخْلَى

خَفِيَ الْيَوْمُ قَائِمٌ بَعِيَالِي
وَيَمُوتُونَ - إِنْ تَعَاقَلْتُ - ذُلًّا "

Yāqūt tells us that "As'ad b. Mas'ud al-'Utbi (d. 402/1011) once related the following anecdote: I entered the great mosque of Baṣra and I saw there a luminous elder who was close to the end of his life. After greeting him I said, 'I suppose you are a poet.' 'Yes,' he replied. 'Recite some verses for me as a remembrance of you,' I requested. 'Write down,' he retorted:

'They say my poetry has changed its mode
This is true, for grief prevents me writing elegy or ode,
But of satire I have plenty if that is what you want
But the eulogies are rare for today's nobility is scant.'" 1

In Persian, Anwari, Suzani, 'Ubaid, Yaghmā and many others should be numbered in this group. Baihaqi writes that

There was a man in Nishāpur called Abu 'lqāsim Rāzī. This man used to train slave-girls and brought them to Amir Naṣr the Sāmānid, and returned with an armful of robes and rewards. Once he had brought a few girls. Amir Naṣr gave him a precious turban and wrote a letter of commendation. The people of Nishāpur congratulated him, and he brought his letter to be read in the Court of Grievances. I heard from my father that the judge Bul-Haytham observed this incident and said sotto voce in the Court, 'It is clear that running brothels is more prestigious than being a judge.' 2

In a period in which rascals stood in the high esteem of the kings and the nobles, those writers and poets who did not wish to suffer penury, occupied themselves playing the literary fool. This occupation was so common that the heroes of wit and stupidity attended the house of the possessors of original jokes and foolish anecdotes. Yahya b.

1. Irshād, vol. II, p. 242:

وَاللَّهِمْ يَشْغَلْنِي عَنْ آلَاءِ شُعَارٍ
وَالْمَدْحُ قَلٌّ لِقِلَّةِ الْآخِرَارِ.

"قَالُوا تَغْيِرُ شِعْرَهُ عَنْ حَالِهِ
أَمَّا الْهَجَاءُ فَفِيهِ شَيْءٌ زَائِرٌ

2. Tārīkh Mas'udi, p. 458.

Farrā' (d. 207/822) said that we had resolved with Ibn Durrāj, the parasite that he would dictate thirty nādiras (rare jokes) in exchange for one dirham."¹ It is recorded, too, that Abu Ḥabīb who was the jester of Maḥdī (d. 211/836), the Abbāsid Caliph, always memorized the navādir of Muzabbid of Madyan, reciting them in the presence of the Caliph and gained remarkable rewards. Mazabbid was upset and used to comment, "What a strange age! I saw, but you reap the fruit."²

The above examples all illustrate an important aspect of satire, that is to say that playing the fool, like other genres of literature, was a saleable commodity and a profession by which a livelihood could be sustained.

* * * * *

Another group of satirists used folly and feigned stupidity against the moral bankruptcy, domination of superstition and political imposture of their age; and in contrast to the above-mentioned class of satirists, who derived a livelihood from their writings, this group sought no reward for their works, rather they set aside their own interests and attacked social evils from an ethical standpoint. Their critique and satirical satire, too, generally consists of folly and stupidity. They employed a deliberate type of folly to counterattack the social folly of others. Its closest Western counterpart is that employed by Voltaire who exploited folly as a weapon to expose stupidity. His Philosophical Dictionary, Philosophical Letters, Zadig and the Child of Nature are archetypes in this field.

In Arabic, and particularly Persian literature, there are plenty of writers and poets who employed the above method. Jāḥiẓ, Ibn Qutaybah,

1. Akhbār Juhā, pp. 36-7.

2. Ibn Shākir, Fawāt, vol. II, pp. 592-595.

Abu l-Faraj and Rāghib of Iṣfahān being among the best. Throughout Persian history, this style of satirizing was so common that even the greatest men of learning employed it in order to attack folly. "Amir Ṭughājār," related 'Ubaid, "asked Mawlānā Qutb al-Dīn Shirāzi, 'What kind of man is a rāfidī (heretic)?' 'The man who copulates with his wife in the anus,' replied the great theologian. Ṭughājār showed great distress and confessed, 'Woe is me! Twice I was a rāfidī.'"¹ Here the anecdote pivots around the meaning of the term rāfidī, which was by its very nature difficult to define, and here 'Ubaid displays the absurdity of the question. Jāḥiẓ thus sums up this technique in the following maxim, "by pretending foolishness, we demonstrate the foolishness of fools."²

5. Destruction of the Symbols. This is in fact related to the technique of "undressing" which is discussed above, but it goes even further and it is fundamental to satire. This technique consists of attacking the symbols which seem sacred and respectable. Men live by symbols, religious or political: the cross, the tricolor and the red star and so forth are symbolic representations of groups and sects and their aspirations, standing for a way of life. The satirist who wishes to show that an emblem is being used for unjust ends or is being manipulated by tyrants and impostors, pretends not to understand its symbolic meaning and significance, and tries to present with as much realism as possible the thing in itself, in other words, the flag is just a piece of cloth. When Voltaire wishes to desymbolise the act of circumcision performed on his satirical hero Huron, the Child

1. Kulliyāt, p. 105.

2. al-Haywān, vol. II, p. 114:

"الَّتِي مَقُ يُظْهِرُ الْحَمَاقَةَ"

of Nature, when becoming a Christian, he describes the scene as follows: "Grace at last prevailed, and the Child of Nature promised to become a Christian. He had no doubt that the first step was to be circumcised, for as he said, 'There is not a single person in the Book I have been given to read who had not been; there is no doubt I must sacrifice my foreskin, and the sooner the better.'"¹ Religions, because they use a highly complex set of symbols, are peculiarly vulnerable to this kind of attack. Militarism is also vulnerable, since all armies use a variety of symbols in order to maintain "morale". One of the brilliant examples of military desymbolisation is Voltaire's Philosophical Letters, while he describes an English Quaker. He begins by making fun of this strange sectarian, who refuses to comply with the fashion of dress or formal manners. But he ends by using the Quaker as his mouthpiece to attack various aspects of "orthodox" religion and particularly the sanctification of the war; finally war itself which was waged mostly without any real purpose: "Our Lord, who has commanded us to love our enemies and to endure without complaint, certainly does not wish us to cross the sea and cut the throats of our brothers because some murderers dressed in red, and wearing hats two feet high, are enlisting citizens by making a noise with two little sticks on the tightly stretched skin of an ass."² The final stroke is assuredly the literal description of the drum: for that is all it is, and surely one of the foremost for the slaughter of millions.

'Ubaid, too, when wishing to show the absurdity of the so-called holy wars which were fought by Mubārīz al-Dīn, his attacks couched in

1. Voltaire, Zadig/L'ingenéu, p. 117.

2. Philosophical Letters, Letter I, p. 7.

the coarsest form, desymbolizes his flag. Here he simply likens the raising of the King's flag to the erection of his genital organ:

When my prick's aroused and stands erect,
It is no meaner than our Ghāzi Shah's battle flag! 1

What may at first appear to be a simple vulgar boast, is in fact the desymbolisation of the emblem of the sovereign's despotism and hypocrisy. On another occasion, he employs the great personality of his age, Aḍud al-Dīn, as his mouthpiece to attack the superstition of his period and the falsehood of the religious authorities. "Shaikh Sharaf al-Din Daragazīnī," he relates, "and Mawlānā Aḍud al-Dīn were both guests in a noble man's house. When they laid the meal, the common guests rushed up desiring the leftovers of the blessed Shaikh's meal. A person who did not know Mawlānā Aḍud al-Dīn said to him, 'O Khwāja pass me the Shaikh's leftovers.' He replied, 'Ask someone else for the Shaikh's leftovers, because I have my fill of the Shaikh (lit., completely eaten of the Shaikh).'"² Here, the allegorical meaning of "completely eaten" is an allusion to an extremely vulgar one, that is to say the genital organ; but of course the point is to play on the words "nim-khurdeh" and "tamām khurdeh", and the butt is the superstition.

To give an example of military desymbolization, it would suffice to quote Voltaire again. In his tale, "The Vision of Babouc", he tries to denounce, by his strong satire, the head of the military establishment.

1. Kulliyāt, p. 62:

”ک... من چون عَلمِ برا فرارزد کم ز شُجوقِ شاهِ غازی، نیت!“

2. Ibid., p. 138:

”شیخ شرف الدین در، گزینی د مولانا عضد الدین در خانه بزرگی بودند. چون سفره بیاوردند عوام بپوشیدند که تبرکِ شیخ می نواهم. یکی مولانا عضد الدین را نمی شناخت، گفت: 'نواص، پاره یی بنموزد' شیخ بمن ده. 'مولانا گفت: 'نموزد' شیخ از دیگری بطلب که من تمام خورده شیخ دارم.'“

Ithrael the genie sends Babouc to the earth in order to ruin Persepolis, because the follies and disorders of the Persians have engendered his wrath. Mounting his camel, Babouc sets out with his servants. After some days, on approach^{ing} Semah, he falls in with the Persian army, which is going to fight with the army of India.¹ He finds a soldier at a distance from the camp, and asks what was the cause of the war. "By all the gods," said the soldier, "I know nothing about it; it is no business of mine; my livelihood consists of killing and being killed ... If you want to know why we are fighting speak to my captain." But neither the captain nor the other officers of high rank can explain to Babouc the cause of the war. After many wanderings, one of the generals says the following words: "The cause of this war, which has laid Asia waste for the last twenty years, originally sprang out of a quarrel between an eunuch belonging to one of the wives of the great King of Persia, and a custom-house clerk in the service of the great King of India."²

Here the point revolves around the soldiers, eunuch and custom-house clerk and the target is the banality and absurdity of war.

Firdawsī (ca. 941), who is the greatest poet in epic poetry in Persian, too, desymbolises militarism and military men in the same manner:

The head of a warrior can fathom no knowledge,
There is no honour in warfare either;
The head of a soldier could not help but folly,
For hatred never mingled with wisdom. 3

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1. Allusion is here made to the wars between England and France (translator's note).
 2. Voltaire, The Vision of Babouc, pp. 3-4.
 3. Shāhnāma, Furughī's Muntakhab, pp. 141-42:

بدانش نیاید سرجنگوی نباشد جنگ اندرون آب روی
سرمرد جنگی خرد نسرد که هرگز نیامخت کین با خرد.

6. Tahakkum, Imprecation and Abuse. These are the last, and perhaps the most outstanding, forms of many satirical devices in both Arabic and Persian literature, and because there is a close connection between them, we shall discuss them together. Tahakkum (irony) is in fact a sort of satire, the difference between the two is that the outward appearance of tahakkum is serious, but it implies derision, whereas satire lies in reading the reverse of the explicit statement.¹ In literary books² there are examples which are quoted from the Koran: 1) "Each has guardian angels before him and behind him, who watch him by Allah's command" (13.12), which at first would appear as a sort of homage or honour for the unbeliever, but it is a condemnation of him, for they lead him directly to Hell; 2) "A voice will cry, 'Seize him and drag him into the depths of Hell. Then pour out boiling water over his head saying: taste this, for you are an illustrious and honourable man! This is the punishment which you doubted.'" (49.44); 3) "Give [the unbelievers] the good tidings, for there is provided a painful punishment for them." (45.7-8). These are obvious examples of Divine satire.

Among the Arabs Abū Nuwās (d. 197/812) should be accounted as a great exponent of this field, and a great deal of Persian poetry, too, exploits tahakkum. Abū Nuwās writes:

I have not the means to satirize you
For my tongue does not flow about you;
When I thought deeply of your dignity,
I pitied my poetry. 3

1. Mursafi, Wasilat, vol. II, p. 82: «التَّهَكُّمُ وَالْهَزْلُ الَّذِي يُرَادُ بِهِ الْجِدُّ: هَذَا مِنْ نَوْعَانِ مُتَشَابِهَيْنِ وَالْفَرْقُ بَيْنَهُمَا أَنَّ الْأَوَّلَ ظَاهِرُهُ الْجِدُّ وَبَاطِنُهُ إِلَّا سَتَهْزَاءُ وَالثَّانِي عَكْسُهُ».

2. See, for example, Khaṭīb Qazwīnī, Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ, under Hazl (Cairo, 1934), p. 98.

3. Dīwān, p. 342:

بِمَا أَفْجُوكَ لَا أَذْهَبُ لِسَانِي فِيكَ لَا يَجْزِي
إِذَا فَكَّرْتُ فِي عِرْضِي كَيْتَ أَشَقَقْتُ عَلَى شِعْرِي

Anwari borrowed it, writing in Persian:

God forbid that Anwari should satirize you
Neither he nor of any other of the rank of poet;
It is not because of your greatness, for your defects,
Neither satire can proceed nor even dare the imagination! 1

which seems at first sight that the two poets want to praise their victims, but soon turns to be a coarse satire.

Invective, or abuse, are the commonest and simplest devices of satire. However simple these devices may be, the satirist should use them with caution lest they backfire and injure him as well as his victim. He is constantly vulnerable, not only because he tells unpalatable truths (and sometimes untruths) but also because he faces the temptation of spiritual pride and vulgarity.² This danger becomes the greater, the more the writer is committed to invective and abuse. Invective, although a sign of vulgarity, is nonetheless necessary for poets and writers to use as a weapon to attract attention to the outrageous abuse pretended by others. To be effective, it needs elegance of the form to counteract the grossness of content, and learned abusiveness to mitigate the open insult. The poet or writer will, whenever possible, launch his invective implicitly or indirectly, and thus demonstrate his mastery of this technique. A fine example of this sort of invective in Persian is Abu al-'Alā' Ganjawi's poem on Khāqāni of Shirwān, his student and son-in-law. When the latter abused him, calling his father-in-law "the dog of Ganja", "mulhid" ("the

1. Dīwān, vol. II, p. 499. See also Shams Qais Rāzī, al-Mu'jam, p. 336:

”ترا هجائیکند انوری معاذ الله
نه او که از شعر اکس ترا هجائیکند
چه جای هجو که اندیشه هم کرائیکند
نه از بزرگی تو، ز آنکه در معایب تو

2. Satirists like Suzanī, Anwari, Yaghma and many others were proud of their dexterity in launching bitter satire on their enemies.

atheist"), a "ghoul", "the son of a harlot" and "Shaikh Najdi", that is to say Satan, etc.¹, he sent him the following poem:

Khāqāni! Your skill with words is very nice,
But listen to this free advice;
A man your elder, you should never satirize,
Perhaps he is your father whom you do not recognise! 2

which implicitly hints at Khāqāni's being a bastard and his mother being a harlot without using any indecent word.

Many Arabic and Persian satirists were abusive, amongst whom we may count Jarir, Farazdaq, Abu l-'Atāhiya, Bashshār, Abu Nuwās in Arabic; Sana'i, Anwarī, Suzanī and Yaghmā of Jandaq in Persian. When reproached, the satirist replies frankly that as his occupation is the writing of satire, he must employ his principle device which is insult and invective. Thus Suzani, perhaps the coarsest and most abusive Persian satirist, writes:

You pray me not to offer insult in my satire —
What should I then present?
Roasted lamb and chickens, delicious sweets
And robes of finest silk? 3

Imprecation or curse (la'n) is another common form of satire.

According to Rashid al-Din Waṭwāṭ (d. 573/1177), "satire means curse

1. Tuhfat al-'Irāqain, pp. 235-7:

هم سرخ قفا و هم سیه روی
سوی دوش و بیمه غفل و غافل
آن بجای حدیث آباده الله
غوری رگت و غول و اصل غوری
همیشه شیخ مجدی اقا د...

بنی رگت گنہ را در این کوی
آن ملحد بوالغلی سافل
آن جاحظ دقت را بیدی خواه
غریبه و غریبه بی ز لوری
چون آن رگ غوری از جهان زاد

2. Mustawfi, Tārīkh-i Guzidah, p. 723; Dawlatshāh, pp. 80-81:

که نکتہ گویمت بشنورالکنا بنا
شاید ترا پدر بود و تو ندانیا!
خامانیا اگر چه سخن نکت دانیا
همجو کسی مکن که ز تو به بود به غمتر

3. Dīwān, p. 43:

مُرخ بریان دهم و بره دحلوا و حریر؟
خدا بهی گوئی دُشنام مدہ پس چه هم

and imprecation."¹ On a simpler level we may observe this device in the holy books. This kind of curse or even invective is occasionally found in the New Testament, e.g. Matthew (23.23), "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, you blind guides, straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel." Again in Jeremiah (5.8), "They were as well-fed lusty stallions, each neighing after his neighbour's wife." In the Koran, too, there are verses which exploit this technique:

Perish the hands of Abu Lahab!
 Not profit to him, from all his welath, and all his gains,
 Burnt soon will be in a fire, of blazing flame,
 His wife shall carry the crackling wood as fuel,
 A twisted rope of palm-leaf fibre round her own neck.
 (al-Masad, sūra 111)

There are other verses here and there in the style of cursing and abusing utterance in the Koran. We see the disbelievers described as "frightened asses fleeing from a lion" (Sūra 75.54). This kind of satire, which in its strict meaning was an abusive imprecation, would demonstrate the power of poets and their tribes in pre-Islamic times. For in that period, the poet was "the oracle of his tribe, a prophet, teacher, encomiast; but above all, he was a warrior and his weapon was satire."² This type of satire was so fatal and effective that even the Prophet himself was forced to use it as a weapon in launching counterattack. We know that he said to Ḥassān b. Thābit (54/674), "Satirize them [the infidels and the tribal poets of the enemies] and Gabriel will help you!"³

1. Dīwān (including) Ḥadā'iq al-Sihr, p. 519.

2. C. Huart, A History of Arabic Literature, p. 45.

3. Ibn Wāṣil, Tajrīd al-Aghānī, vol. II, p. 418; Tha'ālibī, Khāṣṣ al-Khāṣṣ, p. 102: « أَهْجَمُ وَجَبْرِيلُ مَعَكَ »

Many poets later on satirized their enemies by way of this justification. Kamāl-i Ismā'il (635/1237), for instance, wrote:

رول "أهجم" داد فرمان به حسان راهبر گفتن بشیان ندارد

See Ādhar, Ātashkada, vol. III, p. 999.

Imprecation and the act of satirizing was used by satirists to wage war among themselves. It is recorded that Bashshār was paying a good amount of money to prevent Abu al-Shimīqmiq from abusing him.¹ Finally, it should be said that although invective and imprecation have, more or less, the sanction of the Scriptures, the best satirists use it only occasionally, in particular to produce shock effect. Their standard device which helps to avoid the fierce reaction from their enemies' side is irony. In Arabic and Persian it is called tahakkum and sometimes tajāhul al-‘ārif (reticence and Socratic irony). But all ironies do not contain satirical significance. We have dramatic, lyric and tragic irony.² What is intended by irony in this thesis is that sort in which the writer, orator, and poet intend to make fun of a group or a person. Aristotle, famous for his predilection for the neat definition, claims that irony is the opposite of boasting, and "the avoidance of ostentation."³

The best known exponent of its practice is Socrates (ca. 469-399 B.C.). After being pronounced by a sovereign authority (the Delphic oracle) the wisest man of his time, he went about asking people questions. To justify his interrogations, he explained that he himself knew nothing: he wanted, therefore, to learn from others who were eminent men in their professions or, at least, convinced believers in their own knowledge. Surely they knew more than he? Surely they understood what they were doing and why they were doing it? Yet under Socrates' mild but searching cross-examination it usually became clear that they did not, and more important, that they knew not that they knew nothing.⁴

1. al-Aghānī, vol. III, p. 317.

2. G. Highet, The Anatomy of Satire, p. 165.

3. See Ethics, p. 167.

4. A.W. Benn, History of Ancient Philosophy (London, 1936), pp. 45-54.

The term "Socratic irony", which often comes nearest to the Arabic and Persian tajāhul al-‘ārif, was not, however, used by Socrates himself. It was Plato's pupil Aristotle who used irony in a good sense¹, to describe the gentle assumption of weakness and ignorance, coupled with a polite desire to be enlightened, which was the characteristic dialectic technique of Socrates. The concept of Socratic irony passed through the Romans to the Islamic scholars and thence to the West.²

This concept has been presented in various forms by Persian satirists in their dealing with superstition and imposture. However, here irony is not so mild and gentle as that of Socrates, for it is mostly of the sort which can probably be termed "sarcastic"; and usually is so wounding that it cannot be dismissed merely with a smile. Here, again, Arabic satire has had some influence. The following are two examples of the different types. The first is recorded by ‘Ubaid who wrote: "A person said to Mawlānā Aḍud al-Dīn, 'My family bless you without knowing you.' Aḍud al-Dīn replied, 'Why do you say "without knowing"? Perhaps they have already known me.'"³ The word "knowing" here has two meanings: acquaintanceship and a sexual relationship. The second is a poem by Bahār (1866-1951), which is among the finest of Persian giṭ‘as:

- (1) I saw a pretty Persian girl in Baṣra, whose radiant face illuminated the city,
- (2) She was learning to recite the Koran from the Shaikh of the city, whose heart she captivated by her coquettish glances.

1. "Ironical people," writes Aristotle, "who employ understatement appear more attractive in character, because their subject is felt to be not profit but avoidance of ostentation. They also especially disclaim qualities that are held in general regard, just as Socrates used to do." (Ethics, Book Four, pp. 166-7).
2. For more details, see Plato's Dialogues: Protagoras and Gorgias, especially the latter; Aristophanes, The Clouds.
3. Kulliyāt, p. 112:
 « شخصی مولانا عیسیٰ الدین را گفت: اهل خانه من نادیده بردم ای تو مشغولند! گفت: نادیده
 چرا، شاید دیده باشند؟ »

- (3) The Shaikh was teaching her to say, "dalāl al-mubīn" [manifest perversion], and his repeated enunciation of the dād of "dalāl" reached a climax,
- (4) But the girl was unable to pronounce correctly the dād of "dalāl" with her rose-bud mouth,
- (5) The girl would then respond by enunciating "dalāl al-mubīn" [manifest coquetry] while the Shaikh would repeat the phrase over and over again.
- (6) And I said to the Shaikh:
Do not follow the mode of dalāl [perversion] to this extent
For this whimsical girl will not change her enunciation
- (7) It would be best if you retained your own pronunciation
"dalāl al-mubīn" [manifest perversion] and she in her
"dalāl al-mubīn" [manifest coquetry]. 1

The apparent meaning of dalāl is a reference to a Koranic verse (10: 32), but the target of the poet is to deride by way of irony the conduct of the Shaikh in teaching the pronunciation (tajwīd) of Koran to a beautiful Persian girl in vain. At any rate, "satire," as Frye has said, "is militant irony: the satirist uses irony to make the reader uncomfortable, to shake him out of his complacency and to make him ally in the battle against the world's stupidity."²

* * * * *

The following is a list of satirical and facetious terms in Persian and Arabic:

Ibtidhāl, commonplaceness; kalām-i mubtadāl, a trite and non-serious speech.

Istitrāf, to become surprised at a poem, to find a poem or an anecdote fresh and witty. Jāhīz has used it (Kitāb al-Haywān, vol. III, p. 5) alongside zarāfat and ḍahk (laughter).

1. Diwān, vol. II, p. 631-2:

دیدم به بصره دختر کی اعجبی نسب
می خواند درس قرآن در پیش شیخ شهر
روشن نموده شهر بنور جمال خویش
در شیخ دل رُبوده به بغیج و دلال خویش
و آهنگ ضار رفته به اوج کمال خویش
با آن دهان گوشت غنی مثال خویش
و آن شیخ می نمود مکرر تهال خویش
کامین بویخ منصرف نشود از خیال خویش
اودر «دلال» خویش و تواند ضلال خویش

2. N. Frye, The Anatomy of Criticism, p. 223.

Istizrāf, to find (a poem, prose, and an anecdote) witty, making fun; being fond of witticism.

Istihjān, cavilling, fault-finding in someone's speech or writing.

Istihzā', derision, mockery. It is used in the Koran eleven times (19:25; 2:14; 9:66; 6:65; 6:66; 6:10; 13:32; 21:42; 4:139; 2:13; 15:95).

Istihzā'i Socrati, irony; Socratic irony.

Uhjuwwa, the words or odes by which the satire is made.

Uhjiya, the same as above.

Bad-dahānī, abuse, ribaldry.

Bad-zabānī, abuse; indecent talk.

Bad-guī, abuse, backbiting. For the latter meaning, see Hāfiẓ, p. 33, Gh. 55.

Badhā', insult; abuse.

Bidhā', insulting each other.

Badhla, witticism, humour. Derivatives: Badhla-Bāzi, uttering dirty or sexual jokes. 'Ubaid has used it (see Kulliyāt, p. 62); Badhla-pardāzī, witticism; uttering witty jokes; Badhla guī, witticism, derision.

Baṭālat, hazl; facetious saying. Jāhiẓ has used it in this meaning. See al-Haywān, vol. III, pp. 5 and 9; see also al-Fihrist, pp. 313-326, Kitāb al-Baṭṭāl, Book on Buffoons.

Bī-adabī, impoliteness; being outrageous in one's speech and writing. See Hāfiẓ, Dīwān, p. 45, Gh. 64.

Bī-hayāī, impudence, immodesty in one's speech or writing.

Bī-khurdagī, impoliteness, rudeness, boldness in one's speech or writing. Anwari has used it frequently. See Dīwān, 2:492, 2:340.

Bī-sharmī, shamelessness in one's action, speech and writing. Sanā'i has used it frequently. See Ḥadiqa, pp. 163, 209, 311, 419, etc.

Tabassuṭ, to be impudent in one's writings or speeches with others (see Kalīla, pp. 173, 392).

Tajāhul al-ʿārif, reticence, play the simpleton, display ignorance intentionally to deride the men of ostentation, understatement; irony and self-deprecation (the two latter have been quoted from Aristotle's Ethics, pp. 166-7). For more details, see pp. 43-44 of this chapter.

Takhlīṭ, al-takhlīṭu fī kalām, to be delirious, to rave; talking nonsense.

Tarfand, idle talking, falsity.

Turrahāt, ramblings, trifles; idle talks, facetiae. "This word has been used in both Arabic and Persian books frequently," writes Minovi, "alongside hazl, juzāfāt (pl. of juzāfa, unmeasured words and things), khurāfāt (superstitions), poetry -- aiming to look down at it, or making fun of it --, by which, it appears that idle talks, weak expressions, or baseless tales are meant, although they may be witty or exhilarating." (Kalīla, p. 78). The word has a Persian origin. Sanāʿi has used it alongside hazl in Ḥadīqa (p. 609) in the form of turrāhāt mistakenly, and Shams-i Qais has criticized him (al-Muʿjam, p. 268).

Taskhar, derision, mockery. It is the Persianized form of Arabic tasakhkhur from which in Persian later on two compound verbs have been made, taskhar zadan, to mock, and taskhar kardan, to deride.

Tashāghul, to entertain oneself by means of jokes and idle-talking; entertaining conversations. Jāhiz used it (al-Ḥaywān, vol. III, pp. 5-6) alongside baṭālat and ẓarāfat (witticism).

Taṭānuz, to make sarcastic irony; using sarcasm against each other.

Taṭannuz, the same as above. Both terms have been used by Avicenna (al-Shifā', Kitāb al-Shi'r, pp. 38-39).

Tazāruf, to display witticism.

Tazarruf, to display witticism.

Ta'riḍ, to indicate something implicitly by means of derision; to criticize one's writings implicitly. See Khāqānī, Dīwān, pp. 149 and 508.

Ta'yīb, to find fault, fault-finding, cavilling in someone's speech or writing.

Taghfil, folly, foolishness. Derivative, mughaffal, fool, foolish; silly, funny. See Ibn al-Jawzi, Kitāb al-Hamqa wal-Mughaffalīn.

Tafakkuh, to utter witty jokes and humorous anecdotes.

Tafkih, to be humorous with somebody by means of kindness and witticism.

Taqbiḥ, to denounce, denunciation; disapproval of somebody's creeds, speeches or writings.

Taqri'a, reproach, rambling; idle talking.

Tamawwuh, to plate or overlay with gold and silver, to display as right and vice versa; sophistry. We use tamwih, in Persia, instead of the former term loosely or wrongly. See Lisān al-'Arab.

Tahattuk, rudeness in one's writing or speech, ribaldry, impudence.

Tahjā, to satirize, ribaldry.

Tahjil, abuse; to insult one's family or wife with indecent words.

Tahjīn, indecency in creed or speech; fault-finding.

Tahazzu', derision, mockery.

Tahakkum, irony, derision. For more details, see pp. 39-45 of this chapter.

Jamz, derision, sarcastic mockery, scornful folly.

Jawāb (pl. Ajwiba and Jawābāt), anything which is uttered as a response for a question, a critique, a book (or treatise), etc., called jawāb. Its adjectives in Persian are as follows: jawāb-i talkh, arjmand, nātiq, khushk and nāfsuz. In satire, however, it is a type of poetry in which the poet borrows the frame of the other poet's poetry, or his words, and attacks him mostly deriding or belittling his style and meaning. This kind of jawāb is sometimes called naqd (reversion) or munāqada (contradicting each other). It resembles to a great degree English parody, see pp. 28-31 of this chapter.

Churbak, a truth-like lie, facetiae, mockery. It is used frequently in Kalīla revealing the meaning of idle talks (see Kalīla, pp. 42, 70, 109, 327).

Charand, rigmarole. Charand u parand, ramblings; idle talks.

Khabīthāt, mean and indecent words. It is the adjective of kalām or kalima in the Koran in comparison to its opposite ṭayyibāt, "Do you not see how Allāh compares a good word to a good tree? Its roots are firm and its branches are in the sky... But an evil word is like an evil tree torn out of the earth and shorn of all its roots." (14:29-31). It is also the name of a part of Sa'dī's Kulliyāt containing ribaldry and facetiae.

Khush-ṭab'ī, witticism; humour.

Darīdah-zabānī, abusiveness, outrageousness.

Dhar'a, insult, abusiveness.

Dharūlat, idle talking; abusiveness.

Dushnām, insult; abuse. Derivatives: dushnām dādan, to abuse; dushnām gūī, to abuse, abusing; dushnām girī, addicted to receive insults.

Dhamm, insult, imprecation. It is opposite to madh (praise, panegyric).

Zhāzh-khā'i, idle talking; babbling. Originally "Zhāzh was the bush of a thorny plant which is wild and grows in the deserts or on top of hills. People gather it and use it as firewood. The camel, however, digs it out and chews it. People supposed it untasty and useless, and thus allegorically used zhāzh-khā'i, zhāzh-khai'idan, zhāzh-darā'idan, zhāzhguī and zhāzh-dānī in their speech to imply idle-talking, babbling, flat joking and nonsensical speech. Whereas they applied zhāzh as delirium and nonsense." (Minowī, Kalīla, p. 389, footnote).

Sabb, insult, abuse, imprecation.

Sakhar, Sukhra, Sukhriyya, derision, to make fun of.

Safāhat, talking nonsensically; idle talk.

Saqat guftan, abuse, insult. See Gulistān, p. 84.

Shatm, abuse; insult.

Shaṭārat, debauchery, facetious saying. Yāqūt in his biography of Jāhiz of Baṣra, mentions a book written by him called Akhlāq al-Shuṭṭār (The Ethics of the Ribald). He puts Ādam b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, the son of the pious caliph of the Umayyads (d. 101/719) among them. So then he describes him as being ribald (shaṭṭār) and addicted to over-drinking (Irshād, vol. VI, p. 80; vol. VII, p. 303).

Shanā'at, indecency; obscenity.

Shan'at, obscenity in one's writing or speech.

Shūkh-zabāni, humour, witticism.

Shūkh ṭab'i, humour; witticism, having a sense of wit by nature.

Shūkhī, humour, facetious saying.

Duhka, a scornful laughter, derision.

Ta'n, reproaching; fault-finding, derision.

Ta'na, sarcasm; taunting. Derivatives: tā'in, a person who implies sarcasm in his speeches or writings, sarcastic; ta'na zadan, to speak ironically, say something and mean another; ta'na kardan, to speak ironically; ta'na āmīz, sarcastic, ironical reproach.

Tanz, scoffing, ridicule.

Taibat, humour; witticism.

Tayyibāt (pl. of tayyiba), good words, witty poems and anecdotes, opposite to khabithāt (q.v.).

Zarāfat, witticism, subtlety. Derivatives: zarif (zūrafā'), witty; zarifāna, wittily.

Fuhsh and Fahhāshī, abuse; abusiveness; insult. Fahhāsh, a person addicted to abuse, abusive, insulting.

Fushār, babbling; nonsense, delirium. The origin of the word is unknown, although it is used in Arabic books and Mathnawī (Book II, p. 190) as well. It is synonymous with zhāzh, that is to say zhāzh u fushār.

Fazāzat, obscenity in one's action or speech.

Fudūl, Fudūlī, these two words are used diversely in Persian. Fudūl is a maṣdar which means nonsense, idle talk; and fudūlī is the noun. In Persian, however, it is mostly used in just its reverse meaning: fudūl is the person, and fudūlī is his qualities. See Hāfiz, Dīwān, p. 127, Gh. 188; p. 126, Gh. 186.

Falāda, Falādha, ramblings, rubbish talk.

Qadh, reproach ironically on one's lineage, insult.

Qadhf, to attribute shameful acts like adultery to someone (especially women), abuse, reproachful insult.

Kawāza, Kawāzha, derision, to make fun of, facetiae.

Lāgh, ribald, hāzil, buffoon. Lāghi, ribaldry, buffoonery.



Latīfa, joke, wit, humour, jest, maxim. Derivatives: latīfa dānī, witticism, facetiousness; latīfa-pardāzī, witticism; latīfa-sarāī, witticism; latīfa gūī, witticism, possessing a sense of humour; latīfa yābī, seeking witty maxims.

La'n, imprecation, curse, the state of being damned of God's mercy. Derivatives: mal'anat, curse, being put under la'n; la'nat, curse, imprecation; lā'in, curser, imprecator; la'in, cursed, imprecated. See also pp. 41-43 of this chapter.

Laghw, idle talk; nonsense; laghwīyyāt, idle talks, absurdities. The term laghw has been uttered in the Koran eight times (52:23; 23:3; 5:91; 25:73; 19:63; 56:24; 78:35; 28:55). Derivative : lāghiya, nonsense, indecent (Koran, 88:11).

Lawdagī, clownery; buffoonery, humour, obscenity in speech; lawda, buffoon, clown.

Mujūn, dauntless witticism, ribaldry. But "Mujūn," as Ibn al-Jawzī puts it (al-Zirāf, p. 11) literally, "is to divert the real meaning of a word to another." This, however, is not adoptable to Abū Nuwās' mujūns, for example. It is recorded in Arabic proverbs that al-mujūn u tarafun min al-junūn ("ribaldry is a bit of insanity"). Abū Nuwās is the pioneer of this field. Derivative: mājin, ribald. "They said to a mājin," relates Rāghib (Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 402), "'To break wind is sin.' 'If farting is a sin, then defecating is blasphemy,' replied the mājin." Majjān, a person addicted to ribaldry. Mutamājin, sarcastic, saucy; shameless.

Muzāḥ, humour, witticism. In the same meaning there are two other Arabic words: mazāḥat (Sa'dī, Gulīstān, p. 62) and mazḥ. As muzāḥ was a common form of witticism and even the Prophet is himself recorded to have used it, therefore some scholars have made attempts

to give a definition to it. Al-'Askari claims (Furūq al-Lughawīya, Cairo, 1334/1915, p. 212) that "Muzāh is a mis-representation of the true character of something with no intention of causing harm." See also Rosenthal, Humor in Early Islam. Other derivatives: mizāh, mumāzahat, making fun of each other, exchanging humorous utterances; māzih, witty, humorist; mazzāh, addicted to wit, addicted to hazl; māziha, a witty woman.

Maskharagī, buffoonery; to play the buffoon, mockery, ridicule. maskhara, buffoon, ridiculous; maskhara-āviz, ridiculous; maskhara-bāzi, buffoonery, monkey business; to play the buffoon. It is fitting here to quote Aristotle, who draws distinction between humour and buffoonery when he tries to find an average ethical code as usual in his moral system. "Those who go far in being funny," holds he, "are regarded as buffoons (*bōmolochos*) and vulgar persons who exert themselves to be funny at all costs and who are more set upon raising a laugh than upon decency of expression and consideration for their victim's feelings. Those who refuse to say anything funny themselves and take exception to the jokes of other people are regarded as boorish and sour (*agroikos* and *sklēros*); but those exercise their humour with good taste are called witty, as one might say 'nimble-witted'." (Ethics, Book Four, p. 167).

Madāhik (S. madhaka), ridicule, ridiculous writing or speech, harmless joke. Here again we owe the neat definition of the term to Aristotle, who writes, "The ridiculous may be defined as a mistake or deformity not productive of pain or harm to others; the mask, for instance that excites laughter, is something ugly and distorted without causing pain." (The Art of Poetry, p. 33). Mudhik, laughable, comic, funny, ridiculous; madhaka-āviz, funny, comic; madhaka-angiz, laughing stock, everything provokes laughter.

Muṭānaza, deriding each other sarcastically. This term is used by Avicenna as far as I know. See Kitāb al-Shi'r, p. 42.

Muṭāyaba, wittiness, exchanging humorous jokes and tales.

Munāqada, contradicting each other's speeches or writings; reversing each other by means of harsh language.

Nādira (pl. nawādir), rare anecdotes and jokes. It is, however, in the terms of men of letters, a tale or maxim which is laughable on the one hand, and contains an insight or intellectual point on the other. Thus, Rāghib writes, "The nawādir open the ears and enlighten the minds." (Muḥāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 5). From a few nawādir which occur in Qābus Nāma, it emerges that the author has used it as synonymous with hazl. See Nafisi's edition, pp. 31-2. Derivatives: nādira gūftārī, wittiness, humour; nādira-jūyī, nādira gūyī, witticism.

Naqd, critique; criticism, to assess the merits and demerits of a given writing or speech. Derivatives and compound words: naqqādī, critique, criticism; intiqād, criticism; muntaqid, critic; naqqād, critic, addicted to criticism; nāqid, critic; naqd al-alfāz, assessing the merits and demerits of terms in verse or prose; naqd al-shi'r, the critique of poetry; naqd al-ma'ānī, the critique of the meanings; naqd al-nathr, the critique of prose, and finally naqd-i adabī, literary criticism.

Notice. — Some writers do not differentiate between naqqādī (critique) and fahhāshī (abusiveness) in particular among a pack of young writers. The other point is that both the term tanqīd (critique) and munagqid (critic) have not been applied in Arabic, and it is against the grammar, although frequently used among the Persian and Turkish peoples.

Nukta, a delicate point, a witty criticism. Derivatives:

nukta-pardāzī, uttering delicate point, making a witty criticism;

nukta-parwarī, possessing the merit to make a delicate point; nukta-

andāzī, witticism, sagacity; nukta-sangī, witticism, making a delicate

point; nukta-gīrī, criticism, cavilling, fault-finding.

Hujan (S. hujna), the defect in speech and writing, fault-finding.

It has been used as singular in Persian. See Nāṣir Khusraw, Dīwān, p. 501.

Hadhyān, hadhayān, hallucination, raving, idle-talk, nonsense.

It is written and read in original Arabic as hadhayān, but in Persian it reads as hadhyān, too. For the latter see 'Uḡayd, Kulliyāt, p. 89, and for the former see Farrukhī, Dīwān, p. 327.

Harza, nonsense, rubbish talk, abuse. Derivatives: harza-darāī,

idle talking, dirty language; harza-gūyī, abusiveness, insult.

Huz', derision, mockery. See Istihzā'.

Waqāḥat, immodesty, cheekiness.

Yāfa, yāwa, nonsense, idle talk, facetiae. Derivatives: yāwa

darāī, rubbish talk, babbling; yāwa-sarāī, indecent speech, gibberish,

scrabble; yāwa-gūyī, insult, facetiae.

CHAPTER II

ARABIC AND PERSIAN HUMORISTS UP TO THE TIME OF 'UBAID

In the previous chapter it has been suggested that humour or, as Aristotle would term it, "entertaining conversations", is a natural inclination in human beings. In Islam, however, the expectation of the imminent day of judgement and the otherworldliness inculcated by the teachers, all combined to act as a restraint on laughter and its causes, among which we include humorous literature. Koranic injunctions such as "They shall laugh but little and shed many tears. Thus, shall they be rewarded from their misdeeds" (9:83) attracted the attention of many pious characters, above all the simple mystics who shed tears day and night, to whom al-Ghazzālī (d. 505/1111) refers as "al-Bakkā'in."¹ But it seems that such restrictions were not enough to prevent the majority of the people from following their natural inclination, as is clear from the large corpus of humorous literature both in Arabic and Persian.

Authors such as al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/922), Rāghib (d. 502/1108) and Ibn Abi 'l-Ḥadīd (656/1258) and others have related the Prophet's own practical jokes which he is said to have played upon unsuspecting persons. Thus, he told an old woman that old women were not allowed to enter paradise. When she became greatly upset by his statement, he quoted verses from the Koran to the effect that all women in Paradise will be equally young.² Although there are many other examples

1. al-Ihyā', vol. IV, pp. 182-4.

2. Nahj al-Balāgha, vol. V, p. 330; Koran, 56:35-7:

« وَأَنْتَ عَجُوزٌ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ إِلَهُ - عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ - فَسَأَلَتْهُ أَنْ يَدْعُوَ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى لَهَا بِالْحَنَّةِ. فَقَالَ: «إِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ لَا تَدْخُلُهَا الْعَجُزَةُ»، قَضَا حَتَّى قَلْبِهِم عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَقَالَ: «إِنَّا أَنْشَأْنَا هُنَّ إِنْسَاءً فَجَعَلْنَا هُنَّ أَبْكَارًا».

of the Prophet's humour, his biographers seem reluctant to stress this aspect of his character and merely note that "the prophet used to joke and told nothing but the truth."¹

As for the first four caliphs, very little humour is attributed to them, although here and there in the books of adab jokes or nawādir are related to them. Jāhiz, too, relates some humorous words from Abū Bakr and 'Umar and even 'Alī and from 'Abdallāh b. Abbās. Rāghib writes that, "'Umar saw an obese man and pointing to his fat stomach, asked him what it was. 'God's blessing,' replied the man. 'No, rather his curse,' retorted 'Umar." However, even those who admitted the naturalness of humour, could not refrain from enumerating briefly the injunctions against humour and jokes, and in Rosenthal's words even the "later authors at least had some qualms about the legitimacy of wasting one's time upon such light entertainment."²

However, it is not the purpose of this study to discuss the legitimacy or illegitimacy of humour, or its coarse form, satire. For, as already mentioned, people could not resist their natural inclination, the product of which can be found in the humorous anecdotes which fill the books of adab; likewise it is beyond the scope of this work to catalogue instances of humour throughout Islām, and indeed any such attempt would be tedious in the extreme. It suffices to provide a brief summary list of some of the famous exponents of the art from the early Islamic period to the time of 'Ubaid.

It should be noted that humour can be divided into two types, the humorous act and the humorous word. In the earlier period it is the historical humorous act which becomes the subject of the anecdotes,

”إِنَّ النَّبِيَّ يَنْزُحُ وَلَا يَقُولُ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ”

1. Muhādarāt, vol. II, p. 283:

2. F. Rosenthal, Humor in Early Islam, p. 6.

only at a later stage does the act become fictional. Although the topic of this work is humour in its written form, this genre finds its origins in the humorous act and personage whose first appearance is in Iraq at the beginning of the second century A.H. Here the buffoons and humorists were mostly of three groups: the parasites (tufailiyyin), the effeminate (mukhannathin) and the fools (mughaffalin). They established themselves in Basra and Baghdād and continued almost to the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth centuries A.H., and it seems that they developed as a consequence of the wealth and pleasure-seeking of the courtiers and the rich on the one hand, and the abject poverty of the needy, on the other. Parasitism (taṭfil) usually took the form of attendance at banquets, parties or friendly assemblies without invitation on the one hand and gluttony on the other. In one of these 'Ubaid records that when a parasite was asked if he had an appetite, he replied, "Indeed I do. It is my only asset in this world."¹

It is recorded that Tufail al-'Arā'is was perhaps the first who did this, and his advice to his followers is recorded in many sources, including al-'Iqd (vol. VII, p. 230). The archetype representative of this group was Ash'ab, who used to say that "no two persons have ever whispered without my supposing that they wanted to give me some food." There are three anecdotes in 'Ubaid's writings concerning parasitism or parasites², and the humour lies in their behaviour at these functions to which they were uninvited.

Effeminate were the passive homosexuals whose companionship was cultivated in Iraqi society of the time. Their actions were not,

1. Kulliyāt, p. 106.

2. Ibid., pp. 96, 97, 106.

however, limited to homosexuality alone, for they used to sing fine songs and play musical instruments, besides possessing immoral qualities such as providing venues for debauchery and pleasure, and there is no doubt that their clients included the rich and the courtiers and such like. However, the most striking point of their character was their immense ability to evoke laughter and deliver the most delightful and appropriate conversations in the presence of the caliphs and their entourage. There were other tufailis, effeminate or fools, who never enjoyed the high esteem of kings or nobles, and lived and died in obscurity, because they were bereft of the quality of humour. The most famous representative of the effeminate was 'Ubāda.

Fools, too, were a necessary element at court and in the circles of power. Their strange and humorous utterances caused laughter, although their folly was often contrived, for it is clear that some wise people played the buffoon in order to prosper, or to criticise implicitly the corruption and immorality of society. Among these were Būhlul and Juhā. Ibn al-Nadīm¹ gives us a concise list of books on the exploits of the humorists, up to the date of the composition of his book in 371/981. His list consists of two parts: the first contains the names of 19 semi-historical humorists (Baṭṭālīn), the second part enumerating 9 fools (mughaffalīn).

Ibn al-Nadīm tells us that the authors of these works preferred not to claim authorship, perhaps, in order to avoid any confrontation with the religious authorities or religious views of people of their age.² At the same time we can observe the natural inclination of these

1. al-Fihrist, p. 313.

2. For more detail, see al-'Iqd, vol. VII, pp. 230-245; Nihāyat al-'Arab, vol. IV, pp. 1-99.

people to humour, so that even religious or social restrictions could not prevent them from writing on their favourite subject.

Ash'ab (d. 154/771). He lived and died in Medina. He was the most famous of the tufailī group and was known as Ash'ab b. Jubair al-Ṭammā'a (the greedy). Some have claimed that he was born during the caliphate of 'Uthmān (d. 35/655) and reached the age of 120 years; Aṣma'ī (d. 216/821) claims that he had seen Ash'ab¹, and it is recorded from Ash'ab himself that he was collecting the arrows which were shot at the house of 'Uthmān.² This long career, however, is not well documented and seems fabricated. However, his name occurs frequently in Islamic books. "The fullest information on Ash'ab is contained in the Kitāb al-Aghānī. This means that in the first half of the tenth century, the Ash'ab story was fully developed. Not much later, the alleged date of Ash'ab's death (154/771) appears to have been accepted into historical literature."³ Before the Aghānī, however, we come across his name in Jāhīz (d. 255/869) and Ibn Qutaiba (d. 270/884). A good deal of information about him is also available in al-'Iqd in the section on "Akḥbār al-Ṭufailiyyīn" (Stories of Parasites).

Apparently no single work devoted to him has survived, although Ibn al-Nadīm cites a book on him (Akḥbār Ash'ab) by Zubair b. Bakkār, who died 256/869 at the age of eighty-four. At any rate, his importance for us lies in the fact that Persian poets have frequently used his name to denounce the greediness of their victims, and Persian satirists have cited his anecdotes or tales, although sometimes they ascribe his actions to other well-known Persian humorists. 'Ubaid, for example,

1. al-'Iqd, vol. VIII, p. 143.

2. al-Bukhalā', p. 379.

3. Humor in Early Islam, p. 17.

quoted one of his stories, translating it almost word for word into Persian, but changing the name to his favourite mock-hero Talkhak. "I had a dream," said Talkhak, "in which the first part came true, but the second did not." When they asked the nature of his dream, he replied, "I dreamt that I was carrying a sack of treasure on my back, then defecated on my robe, due to the great weight of my burden. When I awoke I discovered the evidence of my incontinence but no sign of the treasure." It is notable that there are political and sometimes non-religious elements in his humour. A good parody on the foibles of the tradition (hadīth) transmitters shows his attitude towards religion. "Ash'ab says that he heard 'Ikrima report that the Prophet had said that two qualities characterised the true believer. When asked which they were, Ash'ab replied: "'Ikrima had forgotten one, and I have forgotten the other."

Bibliography: Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, al-'Iqd, vol. VII, pp. 87-8; Rosenthal, Humor in Early Islam, p. 138; al-Aghānī, vol. XVII, pp. 82-105; 'Ubaid, Kulliyāt, p. 132.

Juhā, Juhī (d. 160/777). A near contemporary of Ash'ab was Juhā, whose existence as a historical personage has been denied. However, as Pellat puts it, "until we are better informed there is no reason to doubt the historic existence of Juhā, who might, moreover, have been called Abu 'l-Ghuṣn Nuḥ al-Fazārī."¹ Some Islamic scholars maintained that there were two persons by this name, one was a traditionist from Baṣra, and the other a fool (aḥmaq) or a mock-hero from Kūfa. But this seems an artifice created by some rigorous religious authorities who found it difficult to accept that a traditionist could have a sense of humour! It is also claimed that Juhā was the prototype for the famous Turkish fool known as Naṣr al-Din Khoja.

1. See Juhā in the Encyclopaedia of Islam.

However, we are not concerned here with the validity of these claims. What is clear, is that from the early Abbāsid period his name as a fool or comedian occurred frequently in Arabic books such as Jāhiz, Ibn Qutaiba, Ibn al-Nadīm, Jawharī (d. ca. 400/1009, al-Ṣiḥāh) and likewise; and in Persian from the early fourth century. Arthur Christensen¹ has found the first appearance of Juhā (in Persian poetry, especially after the sixth century, it mostly occurs as Juhī, perhaps for metrical reasons) in Anwari's Dīwān, who died in the year 586/1190. It has however escaped the notice of this scholar that almost a century and a half earlier Manuchichrī (d. 432/1040) mentioned Juhā as follows:

In our time the market belongs to facetiae and ribaldry
And the currency is possessed by Rūbābī's [satire] and
Juhā's scoffing. 2

Again, at least sixty years before Anwari, Sana'ī (d. 535/1130) mentioned his name twice. In the Mathnawī, however, as Christensen tells us, Rūmī mentions Juhī's name three times. He was also a favourite hero of 'Ubaid-i Zākānī. His name occurs six times in 'Ubaid's Risāla-i Dilgushā (pp. 91, 105 twice, 108, 117, 140). The following is an example of one of his stories:

They stole the door of Juhā's house. He went and picked up the door of a mosque. When he was carrying it homeward, they asked him, "Why have you picked up the door of the mosque?" "They have stolen my house door, and God, the owner of this mosque knows the thief. Thus, when he gives me the thief, he will receive the door of his house," replied Juhā.

Muzabbid, Abu Ishāq. He was a member of the Medinan jesters who lived in the second/eighth century during which period the city of

1. 'Ajab Nāma, pp. 131-137.

2. Dīwān, p. 112:

اندر این ایام ما بازار هزل است و فوس لازم بوبکر زبابی دارد و طرز حُجّی

Medina was a centre for their humour. He later on, however, went to Iraq at the time of Maḥdī (d. 169/785), the 'Abbāsīd caliph. It seems, nevertheless, he could not enter into the caliph's presence as he was ugly. Ḥuṣrī claims that Abū Ḥalūb, the caliph's own jester, used to memorize his nawādir and recited them to Maḥdī, and Muzabbid used to complain to him, "How strange it is that I saw, and you reap." But humour was not his only occupation, for he sometimes made and sold date-wine (nabīdh), and sometimes even provided his house as a venue for illicit meetings between men and women, and thus received financial rewards. This would suggest that such behaviour was common in Medina in those days among the group of people called the al-Mukhannathīn (the effeminate), of these Zarjūn, Dallāl, Hanab, Ṭuwais and Fanad are some of the celebrated ones.

Muzabbid's nawādir are recorded in many books including Jāḥiẓ's al-Bayān (vol. II, p. 51; vol. II, p. 82); Ḥuṣrī's Jam' al-Jawāhir (p. 254); Ibn Qutaiba's 'Uyūn (vol. I, p. 39; vol. III, p. 277; vol. IV, p. 122); Tha'ālibī's Thimār al-Qulūb (pp. 372, 391); Rāghib's Muhādarāt (vol. I, pp. 29, 83, 118; vol. II, pp. 18, 203; vol. III, p. 245) and 'Ubaid's Risāla-i Dilgūsha (Kulliyāt, pp. 92, 97, 98, 136).

The following is a nādira (which is also quoted in Ibn Qutaiba's 'Uyūn (vol. IV, p. 122): "Muzabbid's wife was pregnant. One day she was looking at his countenance and said, 'Woe is me! If the child in my womb turns out like you.' Muzabbid immediately replied, 'Woe is me if he does not turn out like me.'" ('Ubaid, Kulliyāt, p. 92).

Jumayyīz, Abū 'l-Ḥārith, a second century Medinan humorist, usually on the topic of food. He was a member of the group who used to sell their jokes in Iraq, as did Abū Dulāma, Ibn Durrāj al-Ṭufailī and the like. The rich, and even the caliph, used to invite these purveyors

of nawādir to their gatherings and would pay enormous sums for their stories. As a Medinan, he found patronage in Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib's family, and kept company with jesters such as Ash'ab, Dallāl, Ghādirī and others. Up to his time, Ḥijāz was the centre for these jesters, as the government was located there, and also as Damascus, a possible centre, was renowned for the seriousness of its people. However, later on, the centre shifted to Iraq, and consequently humorists came to the province from Damascus and other cities to learn from professional wits and to present their stock in trade to interested people. The most famous representative of this group was Abū Ḥārith. Ḥuṣrī quotes Abū 'l-'Ibar al-Hāshimī, one of Abū Ḥārith's near contemporaries, saying, "We used to frequent the house of a famous wit, when we were young, in order to learn lessons in hazl for which we used to pay." Thus, we can observe how the number of humorists and jesters increases during the caliphate of al-Mutawakkil (d. 247/861) and their profession acquires prestige. It seems that Jumayyiz was closely related to Muḥammad b. Yahyā of the Barmakid family and the house of 'Isā b. Ja'far, who introduced him to Hārūn al-Rashīd.

A great part of his nawādir can be found in Jāḥiẓ's al-Ḥaywān (vol. II, pp. 51, 252); al-Bukhalā' (pp. 7, 179); Ibn Qutaiba, 'Uyūn (vol. III, p. 362); Tha'ālibī, Thimār al-Qūlūb (pp. 35, 37); Rāghib, Muhādḍarāt (vol. I, p. 142; vol. II, p. 350; vol. III, p. 135; vol. IV, p. 317); 'Ubaid, Kulliyāt (p. 97).

The following is one of his anecdotes as related by 'Ubaid: "They asked Abū 'l-Ḥārith, 'Is it possible that a son could be born to a man of eighty?' 'Yes, as long as he has a neighbour of twenty years,' replied Abū 'l-Ḥārith."

Jammāz, whose full name is Abū 'Abdallāh Muḥammad b. 'Amr, a famous mājin (ribald) of Baṣra, lived in the second century. His lineage goes back to Sallām b. 'Amr al-Khāsir, and it is said, too, that his family were Abū Bakr's mawālī. When in Baṣra, he kept the company of Abū Nuwās the poet, they were both the friends of Abū 'Ubaida (d. ca. 179/795), too. His language was very coarse and indecent and he satirized many notables including Abū 'l-'Atāhiya, Ibrāhīm al-Ziyādī and Jāḥiẓ (when the latter was a budding author).

Jāḥiẓ, Ibn al-Shajarī and Tha'ālibī have recorded fragments of his indecent stories, but a more complete record of his nawādir can be found in al-Ḥuṣrī's Jam'. The following is an example which is quoted by 'Ubaid and his predecessor Rāghib: "Jammāz took a boy to his home to violate him. When, however, the boy left his house, another boy asked him what he did. 'Jammāz took me to his house that I violate him,' replied the boy. Hearing this Jammāz was shocked and exclaimed, "What! me violated? A slander! Pederasty, too, is not proven without the sworn testimony of a guardian and two witnesses."

Bibliography: Jāḥiẓ, al-Ḥaywān (vol. I, p. 175); Ibn al-Shajarī, Hamāsa (p. 275); Ḥuṣrī, Jam' al-Jawāhir (pp. 7, 22, 93, 94, 97, 202); Rāghib, Muḥāḍarāt (vol. III, p. 242); Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād (vol. III, p. 125).

Buhlūl al-Majnūn (d. 192/807). He was a so-called lunatic of Kūfa, and most probably a Shi'ite. We first meet him in al-Bayān (vol. II, p. 230) of al-Jāḥiẓ, who depicts him as a simpleton exposed to the rough jokes of the passers-by. He is usually regarded as a prototype of the "wise fools" (al-'uḡalā' al-majānīn). In various Islamic books, a number of anecdotes, both pious and impudent are attributed to him. As in the case of Juhā, it is claimed that he was

a traditionist who attended for a while the circles of Imām b. Nā'il, 'Amr b. Dīnān and 'Āthīm b. Abī al-Najūd in order to learn hadīth, but it is probable that he has been confused with various characters of the same name among whom can be found genuine traditionists. In Persia he is known as Buhlul-i dānā or Buhlul-i Dānanda (the wise Buhlul). His nawādir appear frequently in Arabic and Persian literature. Adab books tell us that he was a contemporary to Hārūn al-Rashīd (d. 193/808). He was also a favourite mock-hero of 'Ubaid. The following are two examples of his nawādir:

- 1) They asked Buhlul to enumerate for them all the lunatics. Buhlul replied, "That would take too long, I'll enumerate the wise men."
- 2) They said to Buhlul, who favoured Shi'ism, "The merits of Abū Bakr and 'Umar were weighed against those of all the other Muslims, and yet they were found to be heavier." "Very likely," replied Buhlul, "they have been using crooked scales."

There is another anecdote quoted by 'Ubaid: "Hārūn asked Buhlul, 'Who is the man you most admire?' 'The person who most fills my belly,' he replied. 'If I fill it, will you admire me?' asked the Caliph. Buhlul replied, 'Perhaps, but you cannot obtain admiration on credit.'"

Bibliography: Jāhiz, al-Ḥaywān (vol. II, p. 230); Dhahabī, Lisān al-Mizān (vol. II, pp. 202-203); Rāghib, Muhāḍarāt (vol. I, p. 18; vol. IV, p. 481); Mustawfī, Tārikh-i Guzida (pp. 637-8); 'Ubaid, Kulliyāt (p. 140).

Abu 'l-'Aynā', Muḥammad b. Qāsim b. Khallād (191-282/806-895) was born in Ahwāz and lived in Baṣra. He was a mawlā of Abū Ja'far al-Mansūr, the second Abbasid caliph. Abu 'l-'Aynā' attended the lessons of Abu 'Ubaida, Aṣma'ī and others. He was renowned as a

stylist, an improviser of nawādir and a great wit. It is recorded that he attended al-Mutawakkil's newly built palace known as al-Ja'fari. "What do you think of our palace?" asked the caliph. "The people usually build houses in the world, but you have built the world in your house," said Abū 'l-'Aynā'. His nawādir can be found in Jāhiz, al-Haywān (vol. III, pp. 37, 49); Nakt al-Hamyān (p. 265); Ibn al-Mu'tazz, Tabaqāt al-Shu'arā' (pp. 415-417); Ibn al-'Imād, Shadharāt (vol. II, p. 180); Tawhīdī, Akhlāq al-Wazīrain (pp. 45, 46, 55, 60, 73, 159); Rāghib, Muhādarāt (vol. I, p. 212); 'Ubaid, Kulliyāt (pp. 71, 93, 97); Tārīkh Baghdād (vol. III, p. 170); 'Ubaid, Kulliyāt (p. 97).

The following is an anecdote which is quoted by 'Ubaid and his predecessor Rāghib only. "A man complained to Abū 'l-'Aynā' about his own wife. 'Do you wish her to die?' asked Abu 'l-'Aynā'. When the complainer replied that he would not, Abū 'l-'Aynā' then asked him why not, in view of the fact that he was so tormented by her. The man replied that if his wife died, he would die of sheer happiness!"

'Ubāda al-Mukhannath (d. 250/864). An effeminate mājin and a favourite jester of the caliph al-Mutawakkil, who was very hostile towards 'Alī, his family and followers. It is recorded that 'Ubāda used to place a pillow under his robe and, uncovering his own bald head and dancing used to cry out, "Here comes the bald, obese Commander of the faithful." It is said that Mutawakkil was highly amused by these antics.

Bibliography: Tawhīdī, Akhlāq al-Wazīrain (pp. 145, 146, 150, 175, 252); Rāghib, Muhādarāt (vol. I, p. 62; vol. II, p. 208; vol. III, p. 216); Kūtubī, Fawāt (vol. I, p. 429). 'Ubaid, too, quotes two of his coarse nawādir (Kulliyāt, pp. 92 and 152), the first of which comes from Rāghib (vol. III, p. 216) and the second from Akhlāq al-Wazīrain (pp. 145-146):

- 1) They said to 'Ubāda, "What did your daughter inherit from her husband?" "Just four months and ten days," replied 'Ubaḍa.
- 2) When Khwāja Bahā' al-Dīn Ṣāhib Dīwān patted Majd al-Dīn Hamgar's backside, the latter immediately broke wind. "Why did you break wind?" asked Bahā' al-Dīn. Majd al-Dīn replied, "It is hardly fitting to allow the suppliant to go away empty-handed!" 1

Here 'Ubaid has substituted two familiar Persian characters for two Arabic ones.

Abū Yazīd (d. 134/751). Khaddāsh b. Bishr b. Khālīd b. Ḥārith al-Tamīmī, known as Abū Yazīd al-Bu'aith al-Baṣrī. He was a fine orator and stylish poet. It is recorded that there was a lasting hostility between him and Jarīr, and they satirized each other very coarsely; this lasted for forty years, and neither could overcome or defeat the other. It is also said that no other two poets among Arabs, either in the Jāhiliyat or Islam has undertaken such a long period of satirizing. Farazdaq supported Abū Yazīd in his conflict with Jarīr. 'Ubaid gives us an anecdote of Abū Yazīd's love affair with a woman, a story which is so coarse as to be untranslatable. He died in Baṣra in 134/751 during the caliphate of Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik.

For his biography and nawādir see Yāqūt, Irshād (vol IV, p. 173); al-Aghānī (vol. VII, p. 44); Muhāḍarāt (vol. I, pp. 142-143; vol. III, p. 253); 'Ubaid, Kulliyāt (p. 100).

Iyās b. Mu'āwiya (d. 122/739). Abū Wā'ila Iyās b. Mu'āwiya al-Muzanī was born in Baṣra. He was one of the great characters of the first and the second centuries of Islam, and was renowned for his

1. Akhlāq al-Wazīrain, pp. 145-6:

« ضَرَبَ الْمُتَوَكِّلُ عَلَى قَفْحَةٍ عُبَادَةَ فَضَرَطَ . فَقَالَ : وَنَجَّكَ مَا هَذَا ؟ فَقَالَ :
يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ، خَلِيفَةُ يَقْفَحُ بَابَ قَوْمٍ فَلَا يُجِيبُونَهُ ؟ »

intellect and wit. According to al-Jāhiz, he could solve many unsoluble problems by virtue of his prodigious mind. He again gives us a few examples of his deep insight and wit which he exploited, particularly when he took up the post of the judgeship in Basra during the caliphate of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz (d. 101/719). Al-Jāhiz writes that Abu 'l-Ḥasan Madā'inī compiled a monograph on Iyās and his nawādir. 'Ubaid, too, relates an anecdote of him (Kulliyāt, p. 101), which can be found in Nuwairī's Nihāyat al-'Arab (vol. IV, pp. 10-11). For more details see Jāhiz, al-Bayān (vol. I, pp. 55-56); al-Bukhalā' (pp. 204, 401-2); al-Ḥaywān (vol. II, pp. 6, 152).

B. Semi-Historical Persian Humorists

Together with the historical humorous poets and writers, there were some legendary or semi-historical characters in Persian history. Our information about them is slight and lacks validity to some degree. However, their legendary or semi-historical personalities played an enormous rôle in both the literature and the daily life of the people. The following is a short list of their names together with the information which we possess on them.

Abū Bakr Rubābī (third century A.H.). Mandūd b. 'Abdallāh, known as Abū Bakr Rubābī, is said to have been a buffoon and bold satirist during the reign of Sultān Maḥmūd of Ghazna (d. 421/1030). It is recorded also that he was the director of the court singers. His biographers have also indicated his virtuosity in playing the rubāb (rebeck). None of these reports, however, is demonstratively historical. What is perhaps certain is that there was a person by this name, but not in the time of the Ghaznavid Sultān, and more likely a century

before him, as the first appearance of his name is found in Manuchihrī's Dīwān (p. 112). Here the lyric poet complains of the currency of satire and scoffing and the dull-market of serious poetry, giving Rubābī and Juḥā as the archtypes of satire and scoffing:

In our time the market belongs to facetiae and ribaldry,
And the currency is possessed by Rubābī's [satire] and
Juḥā's scoffing. 1

Another poet of the sixth century, Adīb Ṣābir (d. 546/1151), too mentions Abū Bakr Rubābī and Juḥā together in a couplet.² It would therefore seem that Rubābī and Juḥā were contemporaries, or at least not very distant from each other in time. It seems probable too that Rubābī was not alive while Manuchihrī was writing his poetry, otherwise he would naturally have avoided any confrontation with such a bold satirist.

Rubābī is among the favourite mock-heroes in 'Ubaid's anecdotes, four of which he relates. However, they are generally coarse and facetious. The following is one in which the critical aspect is more pronounced than the indecent.

Abū Bakr Rubābī used to go out every night to steal. One night he went out as usual, but the more he tried, the less he found to steal. In the end, he had to steal his own turban. Putting it in his armpit he came home. "What have you stolen?" asked his wife. "Nothing but this turban," he replied. "But it is yours!" said the wife. "Silence woman! What you don't understand is that I have stolen this so as not to forget my noble art!" replied Rubābī.

1. Dīwān, p. 112:

اندر این ایام با بازارِ هزل است دُفوس
کارِ بوبکرِ رُبایی دارد و طُزِ حُجّی

2. Dīwān, p. 72:

چو شَرِ نیکِ بیایی نظر نباید کرد
به ژاژهای رُبایی و طُزهای حُجّی

Bibliography: Manūchihri, Dīwān (p. 112); Adīb Ṣabir, Dīwān (p. 72); Farhang-i Nafīsī; 'Abd al-Rahmān Ṣafipūri, Muntahī 'l-erab; Dihkhodā, Lughat-Nāma; 'Ubaid, Kulliyāt (pp. 104, 108, 117, 143). منتهى العرب

Azhar-i Khar (third century). He is perhaps the first of the Persian humorists who can be termed a mughaffal (fool). Born in Sistān, his genealogy reads: Azhar b. Yahyā b. Zubair b. Farqad b. Sulaimān b. Mahrān. In Persian sources he is known as Azhar-i Khar (Azhar the ass), and in Arabic as Azhar al-Ḥimār. It is said that he was the cousin of two Saffārid kings, that is Ya'qūb b. Laith (d. 265/878) and 'Amr b. al-Laith (d. 287/900). Again it is recorded that Azhar was a hero (gūrd) and the chief general of 'Amr b. al-Laith. What we know about him mainly comes down to us in the Tārīkh-i Sistān, a work most probably written in the fifth century A.H. It deals with many Persian ceremonies, manners, traditions and cultural matters. We are informed therein that, "Azhar was an athlete, a brave man of many achievements, a wise man of letters, and many distant corners of the kingdom have been conquered by him. Nevertheless, he played the buffoon and performed antics to provoke people's laughter." Despite all these achievements, he was very humble and sociable, and his humour has a political tone. Of his follies one in particular is famous.

Once, when the courtiers at Yaq'ūb's palace stood, Azhar did not rise, because his finger which he had inserted in the ring used for locking the door, had swollen and was caught there. Realising the problem they summoned a blacksmith who cut the ring and extracted his finger. The next day, however, he again got his finger caught in the same ring. They asked him why he had put his finger there after having such a disastrous experience. He answered, "I simply wanted to know whether the ring had become larger or not."

A proverb has been coined by the poets following this event: "dast dar zufrīn kardan".

Bibliography: Tārīkh-i Sistān (pp. 104-5); Qābūs Nāma (p. 68); Falsafī, Chand Maqāla-yi Adabī wa Tārīkhī (pp. 95-102); Manuchihrī, Dīwān (pp. 143, 170); Dihkhodā, Lughat Nāma; Ibn al-Jawzī, Akhbār al-Hamqā (pp. 136, 196).

Talkhak (fourth century). According to 'Ubaid and a few Persian lexicographers Talkhak was a jester in the court of Sultān Maḥmūd of Ghazna (d. 421/1030). There is no mention of him in the books of Persian and Arabic adab. All we know about him comes from 'Ubaid's anecdotes in Risāla-i Dilgushā. He is the favourite mock-hero of 'Ubaid, who depicts a very interesting picture of his strange legendary character. He even begins the above book with the name of Talkhak and his comic criticism of the Sultān's homosexuality. Throughout his Risāla 'Ubaid attributes twenty anecdotes to him. Most of them contain some social and moral critique, and it would seem that 'Ubaid is using Talkhak as a mouthpiece in order to launch his own attacks on the corruption and loose morality of his age. Talkhak's satirical allusions include sharp criticism of homosexuality (p. 102), attacks against exploitation (p. 105), and the immense power of jesters in despotic courts (p. 111) where nobody could venture to speak to the king while he was angry, except for the idiot jester; he also alludes to the absurdity of wars of any kind (p. 132), the corruption of the judges (p. 133), the fatalistic contentment of the poor (p. 136), the derision of religious superstition and the preference of medical treatment to religious remedy (p. 137) and such like.

It is worth noting that later on with slight alteration, this proper noun became dalgak, a common name for any jester or humorist in Persian.

2. Historical Satirists and Humorists

In the preceding pages some information has been given about legendary or semi-historical satirists and humorists. The following is a list of historical humorists and satirists.

A. Arabic

It seems certain that the pre-Islamic Arabs believed that the poet possessed supernatural wisdom by reason of his alliance with the spirits. He was known as the oracle of his tribe, a prophet-like teacher and panegyrist, but above all, he was a warrior and his weapon was satire. The poet's main function, in that period, was to compose hi jā, as both real and fatal as a weapon, that rival poets hurled at each other as they would hurl real weapons. In fact a man at whom satire was directed might have to dodge, just as he would try to dodge a spear, by ducking and dancing aside. The poet-satirist "led his warriors into battle, uttering his coarse imprecations, shod with one sandal, his hair anointed on one side only, his mantle hanging loosely."¹

This kind of satire, which in the strict sense was abusive imprecation, would demonstrate the power of the poet and his tribe as well, and the outcome of battle was supposed to be dependent directly on the efficacy of his imprecation. This tradition continued in early Islam and later on in a somewhat different way. The Prophet himself used it as a weapon against the enemies of Islam. The Umayyads and Abbasids did the same.

Hassān b. Thābit (590-674 A.D.). He was born in Yathrib of the Khazraj tribe. In his youth, he travelled around the cities seeking

1. Nuwairī, Nihayat al-‘Arab, vol. IV, pp. 134-6.

patronage and praised in particular the kings and nobles of Lakhm and Ghassān in Hira and Damascus in order to obtain wealth. When, however, the Prophet emerged in Mecca, he was converted to Islam, and vigorously defended Islam and the Prophet against the pagan Arabs and the infidels, among them Abū Sufyān, who had satirized Muḥammad. It is well-known that Ḥassān satirized Abū Sufyān in the following couplet:

Do you satirize him when you are not equal to him,
Thus, the worst of you would be sacrificed for the best. 1

It is recorded that when the Prophet came out to war, Ḥassān was appointed to take care of the former's wives in his own house, which was one of the secure buildings in Medina. "They asked him once, 'Why do you not go out to participate in the holy wars?' 'Because a man with a long tongue has a short sword,' he replied." This is a reference to a story that "Ḥassān's tongue used to reach his forehead!" It is said, too, that he became blind in his old age. He took part in the 'Uthmān affair, and satirized sharply the caliph's murderers. Adab critics expressed surprise that such an old man was capable of versifying such effective poems. According to many, and to Aṣma'ī, his poetry was very simple, to the verge of commonplaceness, and never achieved a high level. He used to say, "Ḥassān's poetry was very attractive in the Jāhiliyya, especially in satire, but when his poetry became concerned with goodness, its style and grandeur deteriorated."

Of the Persian poet-satirists Mamūchihri and Anwarī favoured Ḥassān.

1. Shadharāt, vol. I, p. 61: أَتَهْجُوهُ وَلَسْتَ لَهُ بِكَفُوٍّ فَشَرُّكُمْ لِخَيْرِكُمْ أَلْفِدَاءُ

Bibliography: Ibn Qutaiba, al-Shi'r (pp. 170-173); al-Aghānī (vol. IV, pp. 2-17); Marzūbānī, al-Muwashshah (pp. 60-63); Ibn al-'Imād, Shadharāt (vol. I, pp. 60-61); Manuchihrī, Dīwān (pp. 91, 108); Anwarī, Dīwān (vol. I, pp. 193, 199; vol. II, p. 460).

Hutai'a (d. 30/650). Jarwal b. Aws, known as al-Ḥuṭai'a (obese) came from the Banū 'Abbās, but according to his need and circumstances he used to attribute himself to different tribes. He lived in Medina, and was a wide traveller, but a sycophantic poet who used to praise the noble and the rich during his tours, or to satirize them if they refrained from praying. His fatal satire about Zibriqān has been given in Chapter I, pp. 9-10. Ḥuṭai'a is regarded as the coarsest satirist among the early satirist-poets in Arabic. His satire on his mother is recorded in many adab books.

Bibliography: Ibn Qutaiba, al-Shi'r (p. 180); Kutubī, Fawāt (vol. I, pp. 192-5); Muhāḍarāt (vol. II, pp. 183 and 191); al-Aghānī (vol. II, p. 43); Baihaqī, Tārīkh (p. 317).

al-Akḥṭal (d. 92/710). Ghiyāth b. Ghawth, best known as al-Akḥṭal, was probably the greatest poet-satirist of the Umayyid period. He was born in Ḥīra and belonged to the Banū Taghlab, who came to Iraq before Islam. He was a Christian and remained devoted to Christianity, although from time to time he thought of converting to Islam, perhaps according to circumstances. He associated with Muslims, though Jarīr defamed him among the Muslims as a worshipper of the Trinity (aqānīm).

The Umayyids, however, did not care about his religious affairs, as he was capable as a Christian of eulogising that dynasty, while they were extremely disliked by every Muslim especially in Medina. They were able to launch their constant attacks on the pious men and

the nobles of both Mecca and Medina by way of Akhṭal's bitter mockery and coarse satire, in order to frustrate the Meccan and Medinan charges against the Umayyids of deviating from the genuine spirit of Islam.

His devotion to Christianity, however, seems contemptuous. In the al-Aghānī Haiṭham b. 'Adī relates that, when Akhṭal's wife was pregnant, one day a priest passed by. Akhṭal, seeing the priest said to his wife, "Go and ask his blessing." She tried her best, but failed to touch the holy man; instead she touched the tail of his donkey. When she came back, Akhṭal told her not to worry, for he and the tail of his donkey were the same. He enjoyed the profits of his poetic talent while he was a young boy, that is he eulogized the nobles of Kūfa and Baṣra. The peak of his fame, however, was during the caliphate of Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya. When Yazīd succeeded to the throne (60/679) he summoned Akhṭal and honoured him, and the other members of the family followed him in honouring the poet, in particular 'Abd al-Malik, who favoured the poet against all other poets of the court. Immunity, however, collapse when Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik came to power, because of the poet's unbearable miserliness.

Akhṭal reached his height of fame when the two other famous poets of the period, namely Jarīr and Farazdaq began to satirize each other in Iraq. It is said that at the beginning he favoured Jarīr and admired his dexterity, particularly in satire. When, however, the relatives of Farazdaq gave him a considerable bribe, he took Farazdaq's side and launched the coarsest attacks ever written on Jarīr, and continued it until his death in 92/710, and urged Farazdaq through his relatives not to abandon satire of the enemies until his deathbed. The critics of Arabic literature have differed about which of the three

is the most poetical; most of them incline towards Akḥṭal as the best, and Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' used to say, "If he had lived in the Jāhiliyya no poet could have matched him. Akḥṭal used to boast that his satire, even the coarsest, was that if it were recited to a virgin would not cause any shame. This, however, is not true. His satire, nevertheless, contains less abuse and imprecation than his two fellow poets. Bashshār disparaged his poetry saying that he was by no means equal to the two other giants in satire; and Jarīr accused him of bribing the other poets of his circle by giving them drink in order to persuade each of them to provide a couplet, from which he could plagiarise a complete qaṣīda.

Bibliography: al-Aghānī (vol. VII, pp. 169-188); A.H. al-Zayyāt, Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī (pp. 125-126); Marzubānī, al-Muwashshah (pp. 138-141); Akḥṭal, Dīwān (Beirut, 1905).

al-Farazdaq (641-734). Abū Firās Humām b. Ghālib b. Ṣa'ṣa'a, best known as al-Farazdaq, was born in Baṣra in about 20/641 near the end of 'Umar's caliphate. He came from the Banī Dārim, a branch of Tamīm. His grandfather Ṣa'ṣa'a was famous for his generosity and was called "the reviver of goodness". Farazdaq became famous as a poet while he was still young; his father took him to 'Alī, the day after the battle of al-Jamal (the Camel), saying that his son was "the poet of Muḍar". 'Alī, however, recommended the young poet to learn Koran rather than to occupy himself with the art of poetry. The boy took this advice and it is recorded that he put his feet in chains and swore an oath not to release them until he memorized the Koran. His father died at the beginning of Mu'āwiya's reign and he lamented him. After this event Farazdaq escaped from Baṣra, because he had already satirized the Banū Nahshab whom Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān, the newly-appointed

governor of Iraq, favoured; but he was not secure in Kufa either, and so went to Medina, where Sa'id b. al-'Āṣ gave him refuge, although he too was one of Mu'āwīya's governors. Here, however, Farazdaq occupied himself with drinking and womanizing until Sa'id was deposed and Marwān b. al-Ḥakam (d. 65/694) appointed. As Farazdaq had already satirized him, Marwān banished him from Medina. Apart from his satire, the poet was boasting about what happened between him and a group of women who had invited him to join them by means of a ladder.

Two events are outstanding in Farazdaq's life, as his poems demonstrate: his dispute with Nūwār, his own wife, who was his cousin, and his poetical quarrel with his great enemy Jarīr, the poet. In both cases satire played the most eminent rôle. His satirical wrangling with Jarīr took the greater part of his long life; it is said that he came close to a hundred years. He contracted dabīla (abscess of the liver) in the desert, and came to Medina, where he died in the year 110/738. The adab books contain severe reproaches against Farazdaq because of his weak morality, and his own dīwān fairly represents his immorality and follies. It provides sufficient evidence of his loose religious belief and his contempt for all that is sacred. His devotion to 'Alī and his home, however, has been admired, particularly by the Shi'ite writers. He also warned Ḥasan b. 'Alī (d. 41/661) of the treacherous plans of the Iraqis. He eulogized 'Alī Zain al-'Ābidīn in Mecca, while the Caliph Hishām tried to ignore him. Farazdaq versified a splendid panegyric in admiration of Zain al-'Ābidīn, on account of which Hishām imprisoned him. After his release from prison, Zain al-'Ābidīn sent him ten thousand dirhams, but he respectfully rejected them saying that he had written the poem for the sake of God and for the defence of truth.

Many wonderful stories have been told about the coarseness of Farazdaq's satire. He never feared anybody except Miskīn Dārimī (d. 112/730) who himself was a great poet-satirist. Critics and men of letters were surprised at his delicate expression and diverse style of poetry, and Yūnus b. Ḥabīb al-Nahwī used to say, "If it were not for the poems of Farazdaq, one-third of the Arabic language would have been lost."

Although Farazdaq had an irrepressible liking for women, and was very fond of their company, there is not recorded, however, a single couplet or sonnet (nasīb) of his, while his rival Jarīr never fell in love with a woman, but at the same time, he was a master of sonnet writing.

Of the Persian poets, Manūchihri, Anwarī and Khāqānī favoured Farazdaq.

Bibliography: al-Aghānī (vol. VIII, pp. 186-197; vol. XIX, pp. 18-190); Ibn Rashīq, al-ʿUmda (vol. I, p. 72; vol. II, p. 150); Yāqūt, Irshād (vol. IV, p. 205); Marzubānī, al-Muwashshah (pp. 99-117); Farazdaq, Dīwān (Beirut, 1960); Ibn Wāṣil, Tajrīd al-Aghānī (vol. IV, pp. 140-145); Ibn al-ʿImād, Shadharāt (vol. I, pp. 101-104); Nuwairī, Nihāyat (vol. IV, pp. 183-5).

Jarīr (d. 110/728). Abū Ḥamza Jarīr b. ʿAṭīyyat al-Khatfī al-Tamīmī, was born in Yamāma during ʿAlī's caliphate. After living in the desert (bādiya) for a while, he entered Baṣra. Here the popularity of poetry and the comfortable life of the poets, especially Farazdaq, tempted Jarīr to compete with him. It is said that he satirized his father (like Khāqānī in Persian, see p. 123) for his miserliness while he was still a boy, and Yazīd b. Muʿāwiya plagiarized his poem to reproach his own father, because Jarīr's poetry was not yet well-known. However, when later he obtained an audience of Yazīd

in his palace, the poet recited his poem to the caliph (perhaps intentionally), and Yazīd said, "My father left this world without knowing that the poem was not mine," and gave Jarīr a reward and a robe of honour.

From this time Jarīr embarked upon satire, launching coarse attacks on most of the poets of Iraq with paying no heed to the poets of second rank; for example, 'Alī b. Khālīd, best known as al-Bardukht al-Fārī, satirized him, but Jarīr did not respond. The first experience of rewards and robes of honour came from a panegyric which Jarīr made in praise of Ḥakam b. Ayyub, the governor of the city on behalf of Ḥajjāj. He wrote to Ḥajjāj that an A'rābī had come to him who possessed excellent wit and extremely fine poetry, a Satan of the Satans! Ḥajjāj sent for the poet, and they met in Wāsiṭ, where Ḥajjāj used the poet's powerful satire in defaming his adversaries. The most outstanding event of this poet's life was his satire against the two giants of his time, Farazdaq and Akḥṭal. He is justly regarded as the greatest poet-satirist of his time. Apart from Akḥṭal and Farazdaq, he satirized forty-three other poets, some of whom used to pride themselves as having been satirized by him. None of them, it is said, was his equal but Farazdaq. Their satirizing of each other began in about 65/686 and continued until their deaths which happened in 110/728. Jarīr was favoured by many Persian poet-satirists including Manuchihrī, Anwarī and Suzanī in particular.

Bibliography: Ibn Qutaiba, al-Shi'r (p. 283); al-Aghānī (Bulāq) (vol. VII, pp. 38-77); al-Muwashshah (pp. 118-132); Sharif Qāsim, Shi'r al-Basra (pp. 91-104); Jarīr, Dīwān (Beirut, 1960).

Yazīd b. Muffarigh al-Himyari (first century A.H.). This poet is mainly famous for his coarse satires on Ziyād b. Abīh (d. 53/673) and his family. It is said that when ‘Abbād b. Ziyād, the brother of ‘Ubaidallah b. Ziyād, was appointed as the governor of Sīstan, the above poet accompanied him. Although he was a great poet of his own right, for a long while he was ignored by ‘Abbād. With the touchiness of a poet, he was irritated and began to write bitter satire on his patron and his already infamous family. ‘Abbād put him in prison, from which he managed to escape, and made his way to Iraq and Syria. Wherever he stopped, he circulated satires against Ziyād and his home. Ziyād, however, was able to recapture and reimprison him, subjecting him to severe punishment, and seeking from Yazīd permission to kill the poet. The caliph, nevertheless, rejected the proposal and allowed him only to punish the poet harshly.

Ziyād, therefore, ordered him to be tied up with a cat, a pig and a dog. Then he forced the poet to take a very strong laxative called "shābram" with date-wine. His officers then paraded the poet around the city in this funny and at the same time shameful manner. It was not long before the poet got dysentery. The children of Baṣra were watching this ridiculous scene, seeing what flowed from Yazīd's trousers. They asked, "What is this?" ("In shist?" in Arabic, pronunciation of "In chist".) and the poet was answering:

Ābast u nabidh ast	‘Uṣārāt-i zabib ast
Wa dunbi farba pih ast	Sumayya ru sapidh ast!

This is the water and date wine, and the juice of the fig
And the fat and the oil, and Sumayya (the mother of Ziyād)
is a harlot!

This simple, but very effective and coarse satire, is regarded as one of the first Persian poems after the domination of Islam in Iran.

Bibliography: Jāhiz, al-Bayān (vol. I, p. 61); Ibn Qutaiba, al-Shi'r (p. 209); al-Aghānī (vol. XVII, pp. 51-73); Tārīkh Tabarī (vol. II, p. 192); Yāqūt, Irshād (vol. VII, p. 297); Qazwīnī, Bīst Maqāla (vol. I, pp. 39-42); Zarrīn Kūb, A., Du Qarn Sukūt (Tehran, 1968, pp. 121-122); Yazīd b. Mufarrigh, Dīwān (1975 ed. Dr. 'Abd al-Quddūs Abū Ṣālih).

Bashshār b. Burd (693-783). Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr, the second Abbasid caliph built Baghdad in 145/762 and made it the capital city of the Abbasid family. It was therefore not long before poets from all corners of the Empire came there in order to demonstrate their artistic talent in the field of poetry, something impossible in other cities. Among these characters were Muṭī' b. Iyās (d. 170/787), Ṣālih b. 'Abd al-Quddūs al-Azdī (d. 167/783), Abū Dulāma Zand b. Jawn (d. 161/777), Abū 'l-'Atāhiya (d. 211/826), Bashshār b. Burd, Abū Nuwās and many others. These were humorists of the highest rank apart from being amongst the outstanding poets of their time. They were born and brought up mostly in Baṣra and Kūfa and the like, but their eminence and fame was recognised only in Baghdād. Of all these we discuss only Bashshār and Abū Nuwās, because of their great influence on the Persian satirists and humorists.

Bashshār was born in Baṣra of Persian origin, and possibly even of royal race, as he himself asserted. He praised a handful of the nobles, among them Sulaim b. Hishām. While he was in Baṣra he made the acquaintance of the theologian Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā' (d. 131/748), the founder of the Mu'tazilite school. But, as he used to prefer his ancestral religion, that is Manichaeism to Islamic beliefs, and also tried to represent the demoralisation of Baṣra in his poems, he consequently lost the friendship of the great theologian. It is

recorded that Bashshār wrote a poem in which he strongly supported the Manichaean doctrine that "The Earth is dark, and fire is brilliant. Ever since it has existed men worshipped it."

He was always suspected man, and because of his coarse language had many enemies, but his panegyrics for the caliph Mahdī (d. 169/785) saved him for a while. The pressure of his enemies, however, forced the caliph to take the matter seriously. They displayed the provocative lyrics on women and his over-indulgence in harmful ribaldry and facetiae. The caliph, therefore, first forbade him to mention women in his poetry. But as he was by nature a satirist, he first satirized the minister Ya'qūb b. Dāwūd, and then the caliph himself. Consequently, the caliph and the minister, pretending to go hunting, summoned the poet into their ship. There, they inflicted seventy lashes of which the poet died at the age of nearly *ninety*.

Bashshār had begun to compose poems before he was ten years old, and used to boast that he had satirized Jarīr in the hope that the latter would answer him. Jarīr, however, did not do so, presumably thinking him too young. Bashshār used to say, if he had answered me, I should have been the greatest man of letters in my time." Concerning his capability in satire, first of all, it should be noted that he was a misanthropic satirist. His first poem was satirical, and as he was blind, he used to say, "I thank God for having made me blind so that I need not see that which I hate," that is the people. It is recorded, too, that when he was to recite a poem he would clap his hands, cough, and spit right and left. He was, as Jāhiz relates, a great orator, and once he opened his mouth, he won the admiration of his audience. He had already one of the important assets of satire, that is, he was very ugly, for besides his congenital infirmity which had left him

with two pieces of red flesh instead of eyes, he was deeply pitted with small-pox. He was also very obese, and his adversaries likened him to a buffalo. It is recorded that once a woman told him, "I do not understand why people fear you, when you have such an ugly face and deformed body?" "People do not fear a lion because of his beauty," replied the poet.

According to his biographers, he wrote nearly 12,000 qasīdas, but only fragments have survived. A good many of his satirical poems and coarse nawādir have come down to us in al-Aghānī.

Bibliography: Jāhiz, al-Haywān (vol. III, pp. 122-3); Ibn Qutaiba, al-Shi'r (p. 497); Tārīkh Baghdād (vol. VII, pp. 112-118); al-Aghānī (vol. IV, pp. 213-259); Huart, A History of Arabic Literature (pp. 67-69); A. Hasan al-Zayyāt, Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī (pp. 298-303); Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt (vol. I, pp. 71-73).

Abū Nuwās (139/756-197/811). Hasan b. Hānī' al-Ḥikamī, better known as Abū Nuwās al-Ahwāzī, is perhaps the greatest poet of the Abbasid period and one of the greatest poets of Arabic adab. He was born in Ahwāz. His father was an Arab, and served in the army of Marwān b. Muḥammad (d. 132/749), the last caliph of the Umayyad dynasty. His mother, however, was a Persian named Jullabān who worked as a washerwoman in a fuller's yard.

Abū Nuwās learned Persian from his mother, and used to employ Persian terms, phrases, and proverbs in his poetry. His poems have abundant touches of Persian taste and nature. He inserted an old Persian proverb and employed with great charm and mastery in the following qit'a:

I petitioned a kiss from her and I succeeded after many
twists and turns,
Then I said, "O cause of my torment, for the sake of God
bestow on me another and fulfil my desire";
She smiled, however, and told the parable known to
Persians which is no lie:
"Do not give one to the baby, for if you do, he will
demand another insistently." 1

Later on, Farrūkhi of Sīstan (d. 429/1037), one of his followers
in the ghazal, used almost the whole of this superb qit'a in the
following poem:

I wanted two kisses from her ruby lips and said,
"Water a fading plant with your water of grace":
"One is enough," she replied, "and if you take the second,
it will cause an uproar, we have experienced many such,
My kiss is the second life, and it is impossible
For anyone to be given a second life." 2

Many Persian words and names can also be found throughout his diwān,
which suggest his full understanding of that language. It was, however,
in Baṣra that he enjoyed the teachings of the poet Wālībat b. al-Ḥubab
al-Asadī. At the same time he visited Abū Zaid al-Anṣārī, and Abū
‘Ubaida, two great grammarians of the period, and mastered the subtleties
of the Arabic tongue. Later on, he spent a year in the desert, through
the advice of Khalaf al-Aḥmar in order to study the pure Bedouin
language; at the end he came to Baghdād. Ishāq al-Muṣīlī (d. 205/820),

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1. Diwān, p. 79: بَعْدَ مَنَاجٍ وَشِدَّةِ التَّعَبِ
سَأَلْتُهَا قُبْلَةً فَفُزْتُ بِهَا
خُودِي بِأُخْرَى أَقْضِي بِهَا لِرَبِّ
فَقُلْتُ بِاللَّهِ يَا مُعَذِّبَتِي
يَعْرِفُهُ الْعُجَمُ لَيْسَ بِالْكَذِبِ
فَأَبْتَسَمَتْ ثُمَّ أَرْسَلَتْ مَثَلًا
يَظْلُبُ أُخْرَى بِأَعْنَفِ الطَّلَبِ
لَا تُعْطِينَ الصَّبِيَّ وَاحِدَةً
2. Diwān, p. 149: خَوَاسِمُ لَزْلَعِلٍ أَدْرَدُ بَوَسَهُ وَكُفْتَمُ
مَرْبِي كُنْ بِأَبٍ لَطْفٍ مَخْشَى رَا
فَقَدْ نُوذَ أَرْمُودُهُ أَيْمُ نَبِي رَا
كُفْتُ كَيْبِي بَسْ بَدْرٌ وَكَرْدُ نِسَانِي
عُمُرُ دُوبَارَهٗ اسْتَبْرُوهٗ مِنْ هَرَكَزِ
عُمُرُ دُوبَارَهٗ نَذَادَهُ أَنْدَ كَسِي رَا

the great musician of Hārūn introduced the poet to the caliph, and the poet wrote fine panegyrics in praise of the caliph. What he wanted, however, he found in the praise of the Barmakid house, and later on of the governor of Egypt, Khaṣīb b. Ḥamīd al-ʿAjamī.

Life, nonetheless, was not comfortable in Egypt, and so he satirized the Egyptians, claiming that generosity had disappeared in that country. After Hārūn's death, Abū Nuwās returned to Baghdād, and enjoyed the best years of his life during the short reign of Amīn (d. 198/813), the son of Hārūn, who himself was a poet with loose morality like the poet. But his satire and in particular his pornographic or indecent literature (al-adab al-makshūf) was so coarse and anti-religious that even the pleasure-seeking caliph was forced to imprison him for a short time, and even to threaten him with death. The poet wrote this line from prison, "If you kill Abū Nuwās, where will you find another?"

It is said also that when Ma'mūn (d. 218/833) announced the deposition of his brother Amīn, he ordered a charter (manshūr) to be written on his defects to be read in the pulpits of Khurāsān. Among them was the charge that he had accompanied a sarcastic, infidel and indecent poet named Hasan b. Hānī', that is Abū Nuwās (Ḥuṣrī, Zuhr al-Ādāb, vol. II, pp. 12-13). There are different versions of this poet's death; it is recorded that he satirized his patrons, the Nawbakht family, and their men killed him (Dīwān, pp. 171-172); his biographer, however, tells us that he died in prison because of a poem which was extremely anti-religious and in praise of fornication (Ibn Manẓūr, Akhbār Abī Nuwās, p. 97).

Concerning his ability as a poet, much has been written. Jāḥiẓ, for example, wrote:

I have not seen a person more knowledgeable in vocabulary, more elegant in style, more fond of simplicity in poetry than Abū Nuwās. He was experienced in all kinds of poetry, but he distinguished himself in explicit satire, outspokenness, veracity in his explanation of his own nature and community. His description of wine was so delicate and effective that even the two Ḥasans [Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Ḥasan b. Sirrain, both died in the year 110/728], the most pious of their time, heard it, they would immediately travel in order to enjoy it.

Of lower quality were his panegyrics, which were unnatural and marked by superficiality. But in all other aspects, his poetry is splendid, one of his merits was his self-criticism. It is said that he used to write a poem, and would leave it for one day, and the next day take out the weak and unfitting couplets; it is because of this that his poems are usually short.

His memory was extraordinary, and what is not less remarkable, he possessed no library. Nothing was found after his death save a bookcover, within which lay only a manuscript containing notes on grammar.

His diwān contains the most satirical remarks, including explicit preference for boys over girls (Diwān, p. 128). His boldness in expressing his debauchery and infidelity brought him many disasters. Many times he boasted of committing every sin except atheism. He derided the tradition on the unlawfulness of wine and claimed that in this subject one should obey Satan rather than God (Diwān, p. 76). He also made fun of the pilgrimage to Mecca, and the time of prayer.¹

Many Persian poets have followed him in praising wine and adopting the satire as an effective weapon against hypocrites, and narrow-minded

1. Diwān, pp. 76 and 194; p. 239:

وَإِنِّي فِي كَسْبِ الْعِصَايَ لِرَاغِبٌ
وَإِنِّي لِمَنْ يَهْوَى الرِّيَا لِمُجَانِبٌ

* نَعَمْ إِذَا فَنَيْتَ لَدَاتِ بَغْدَادِ
فِي بَيْتِ قَوَادِرِ أَرَبَيْتَ نَبَادِ؟

أَنَا أَلْمَاجِنُ اللَّوْطِيِّ دِينِي وَاحِدٌ
أَدِينُ بِدِينِ الشَّيْخِ يَعْقِي بِنِ الْوَلَمِ

* وَفَائِلٌ هَلْ تُرِيدُ الْحَجَّ؟ قُلْتُ لَهُ
فَلَيْتَ بِالْحَجِّ لِي مَا دُمْتُ مُنْفِيسًا

people, including Farrukhī, Manuchihrī, Rūhī, Shatranjī and in particular Suzanī, who regarded himself as "the true successor of Abū Nuwās." 'Ubaid, too, regarded this libertine highly. There are three anecdotes in his writings on Abū Nuwās, of which is the following:

Abū Nuwās saw a drunken man and expressed surprise. They said to him, "What provoked your laughter, when you are like him?" "I have never seen a drunken man," replied the poet. "How is that?" asked they. "Because I get drunk before everyone else, and do not come to my senses until after them, therefore I know nothing about drunken men," replied Abū Nuwās. (Kulliyāt, p. 95).

Bibliography: Jāhiz, al-Haywān (vol. I, p. 56; vol. II, pp. 118-119; vol. III, p. 155); Ibn Qutaiba, al-Shi'r (pp. 501-3); al-Muwashshah (pp. 263-289); al-Aghani (vol. VI, pp. 148-151); Tārīkh Baghdād (vol. VII, pp. 439-449); 'Umar Farrukh, Abū Nuwās (Beirut, 1939); Farīd al-Rafā'ī, 'Asr al-Ma'mūn (vol. III, pp. 216-248); 'Awfī, Lubāb (vol. II, pp. 143-4); Farrukhī, Dīwān (pp. 21, 43, 96, 97); Manūchihrī, Dīwān (pp. 21, 25, 73, 99); Tārīkh-i Guzīdah (pp. 771-712); 'Ubaid, Kulliyāt (pp. 95-6).

Jāhiz al-Baṣrī (160-255/776-868). Abū 'Uthmān 'Amr b. Baḥr, well-known as Jāhiz al-Baṣrī, was born and brought up in Baṣra, which was at that time the centre of learning and the cradle of adab. He was from an obscure family of mawālī which belonged to the Banū Kinda. He owes his sobriquet to a malformation of the eyes (Jāhiz with a projecting cornea). Jāhiz, who has been called "the genius of the Arabs and the Voltaire of the East", was a real devotee of knowledge. From an early age an invincible desire pushed him towards learning. He attended the teaching circle of al-Aṣma'ī (123-216/740-831), and entered into the discussions of the Mu'tazilites. He met Abū 'Ubaida Ma'mar b. al-Muthannā, and above all the greatest scholar and theologian of that time, Abū Ishāq al-Naẓẓām (d. 231/845), and from

then on supported his doctrine with great energy. Jāḥiẓ, however, was not a simple follower of al-Nazzām, or a mere student of Mu'tazilism, for he developed his own ideas and founded a new doctrine called Jāḥiẓiyya.

Concerning his ability as a writer, it suffices to note that "one of the signs of the Koran being a miracle, was Jāḥiẓ's belief in it." Almost every great man of letters regarded his style as unrivalled. He spent most of his life in his motherland, and was greatly respected by the different rulers or governors of Iraq and elsewhere, and wrote dissertations to defend their power and legality. During the caliphate of Ma'mūn, however, he left Baṣra for Baghdad and remained in that city during the reign of three other caliphs: Mu'taṣim, Wāthiq and Mutawakkil. Later on, he was on intimate terms with Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Malik b. al-Zayyāt during his three times of ministerial posts. When, however, the latter was forced to resign and put to death, Jāḥiẓ retired to Baṣra. At the end of his life he contracted hemiplegia and finally died in the year 255/868.

Jāḥiẓ was a many-sided and prolific writer and wrote about almost every subject current at his time, including theology, animals, military arts, poetry, politics, oratory and psychology. But the most striking point of his writing is his ability to mingle the serious with the playful. His immense power of observation, his light-hearted scepticism, his comic sense and satirical turn of mind, fit him admirably to portray human types and society. It is not, therefore, for nothing that for the majority of the literate world of Islam, Jāḥiẓ remains, if not a complete buffoon, at least a kind of knowledgeable jester. This is because of two factors: first, his numerous witty and on occasions coarse satirical anecdotes; secondly, perhaps, because of

his own deformity, which as was stated in Chapter I, is in its turn a major motive for witticism. At any rate, his sense of humour throughout his books enabled him to deal entertainingly with serious subjects and helped to popularize them. His most important works in this field include Kitāb al-Bayān, Kitāb al-Tarbī' wal-tadwīr (ed. Ch. Pellat, Damascus, 1955) and the lost Kitāb al-Madāhik, quoted by al-Baghdādī.

Many men of letters have admired Jāḥiẓ; his style of writing and the strength of his argumentation. Abū Ḥayyān Tawḥīdī (d. ca. 400/1009) of Nīshābūr is perhaps one of the best known of them, and is known to scholars as the "Jāḥiẓ of Khurāsān". 'Ubaid, too, seems to have had a high opinion of Jāḥiẓ. There is one anecdote about him in his works:

A jurist asked al-Jāḥiẓ, "If a pebble of the Ka'ba should enter into a person's shoe, it would weep towards God until they bring it back to its proper place." "Yes, it should weep until its throat becomes torn," replied al-Jāḥiẓ. "But the pebble has no throat," said the jurist. "If it has no throat, then how can it weep?" answered al-Jāḥiẓ.

Bibliography: Yāqūt, Irshād (vol. IV, pp. 211-290); Khalīl Mardam, al-Jāḥiẓ (Damascus, 1930/1349); Muḥammad Kūrd 'Alī, 'Umarā' al-Bayān (pp. 312-493); Ḥasan al-Sandūbī, Rasā'il al-Jāḥiẓ (Cairo, 1943); Ch. Pellat, al-Jāḥiẓ, Encyclopaedia of Islam; A. Ḥasan al-Zayyāt, Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī (pp. 257-260); Shahrīstānī, al-Mīlāl (pp. 80-83); Zuhdī J. Hasan, al-Mu'tazīla, (pp. 145-148); 'Ubaid, Kulliyāt (p. 136).

Rāghib al-Isfahānī (d. 502/1108). Abū 'l-Qāsim Husain b. Muḥammad b. Mufaddal, well-known as Rāghib al-Isfahānī, was a great man of letters, a theologian and an erudite exegetist of the Koran. Of the details of his life nothing is known beyond that he died perhaps in the year 502/1108. Some regarded him as a Mu'tazilite, but a short

glance at his works in particular al-Mufradāt fī Gharīb al-Qur'ān (for example, jabr, shafā'a, 'adl) and Muhādarāt discredits this claim. Incidentally, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209), too, confirms his orthodoxy and states that he was inclined towards Ash'arism, putting him alongside al-Ghazzālī (d. 505/1111), who was among the greatest Ash'arites. Fakhr al-Dīn writes,

The philosophers agreed to take for granted the existence of certain things, which are neither spacious [mutahayyiz] nor would enter in spatial entities, such as the intellects, souls and matter. They even believed that the things which everybody indicates saying, "I am existant", are not solid matter or corporeal, and nobody has said that those who held such an idea denied the self-evident truths (that is, the existence of non-spacious things). We can quote many Muslim scholars who followed their doctrine (i.e. philosophers), among them Ma'mar b. al-Muthannā from the Rāfidites and Abū 'l-Qāsim al-Rāghib and Abū Ḥamīd al-Ghazzālī of our colleagues (i.e. Ash'arites).

Apart from this clear evidence, Rāghib's own scornful remarks and hints on Mu'tazilites leave no room for hesitation about his being an Ash'arite. He quotes al-Jāhiz (an outstanding Mu'tazilite) saying that "a group of Rafidites believe in the wiqāya (protection), that is when a man's wife got ill, he may borrow another's wife, on the understanding that he is permitted to do everything except copulate."¹ There are frequently such hostile references to Mu'tazilites and Rafidites which leaves no room for doubt that he was an orthodox Ash'arite.

Other than his famous Koranic Dictionary which is noted above, his studies on the contents of Koran are, too, excellent, and al-Baiḍāwī (d. 685/1286) is said to have taken a great part of his Risāla Munabbīha 'alā Fawā'id al-Qur'ān, now lost. His views on ethics are well-represented

1. Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 236:
 « وَقَالَ الْجَاهِظُ إِنَّ جَمَاعَةً مِنَ الرَّاغِضَةِ يَقُولُونَ بِالْوَقَايَةِ : إِذَا أَعْتَلَّتْ أَمْرًا أَحَدِهِمْ أَسْتَعَارَ أَمْرًا غَيْرَهُ بِشَرِيطَةٍ إِنْ لَا يَتَعَرَّضُ لِلْفُرْجِ كُلِّ لِيَا دُونََهُ ! »

in Kitāb al-Dharī'a ila Makārim al-Sharī'a which is regarded as of high importance, and it is said that al-Ghazzalī always used to carry a copy of it with him. His masterpiece, however, in the field of adab is Muhādarāt al-Udabā' wa Muhāwarāt al-Shu'arā' wal-Bulaghā'. This is in fact a compact encyclopaedia of all literary branches, full of subtleties in every possible subject. It is divided into 25 hadd, each again divided into fusul and abwāb, beginning with intelligence ('aql) and stupidity (hūmq) and ending with hadd 25 which deals with miscellaneous subjects.

Concerning its literary value, it must be said that it is thoughtful writing, backed by fine style and excellent meaning comparable with al-Aghānī, 'Uyūn al-Akhbār and many other books of its type. Whatever one can find in other adab books at random, can be found regularly and orderly in this book in the fewest possible words. Although we do not know very much about Rāghib himself, his book attracted the attention of men of letters. A Persian translation of this book, entitled al-Nawādīr, is in Tehran (Yūsuf I'tisāmī, Catalogue de la Bibliothèque du Madjless, vol. II, p. 308). Unfortunately we do not know the date of translation and the name of the translator because a few pages from the beginning of the book are missing. The style of the book, however, shows that it is later than the ninth century A.H.

The importance of Rāghib's book for us lies in the fact that it was 'Ubaid's main source for his anecdotes. The present writer has no hesitation in claiming that 'Ubaid had Rāghib's work at his disposal, because of the ninety-three anecdotes which form the Arabic part of the Risāla-i Dilgushā, forty-one are recorded in the Kitāb al-Muhādarāt. Certainly some of these tales can be found in sources previous to

Rāghib like 'Uyūn al-Akhbār and al-Aghānī, Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā' by Ibn al-Mu'tazz and in particular the books of adab by Jāhiz. 'Ubaid's words, however, are closest to Rāghib and sometimes it looks like sheer copying! Many of 'Ubaid's Persian anecdotes, too, are simple, but skillful translations of Rāghib (unlike the Persian translator of the latter, who has missed the point of the Arabic texts). In the last chapter of this thesis the place of each anecdote has been given.

At any rate, it seems certain that Rāghib was the main reference for 'Ubaid during the time he was writing his Risāla. 'Ubaid, nevertheless, gives nobody as his source, not even Rāghib. There are certain passages or chapters in Rāghib's Muhādarāt which cannot be found elsewhere in Arabic and Persian literature except sporadically. The fourth and sixteenth hadds are particularly interesting. The latter, which is termed "fī 'l-mujūn wal-sakhf" (On ribaldry and nonsense) is a fetching one. Here, he puts together almost everything that had been said about liwāta (homosexuality), ijāra (hiring), ubnat (prurience), takhannūth (effeminacy), qiyādat (panderism) up to his time. In this respect he quotes the ideas of both approving and disapproving groups on humour, satire and indecent literature. He personally disapproves of those intolerant authorities who claim that humour dishonours human beings, saying that "without humour and self-indulgent joking life is like a prison."¹ In this book, too, like any other famous Arabic adab book, the central characters of humour are the celebrated Abbasid ones.

Bibliography: Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Asās al-Taqdīs (p. 5); al-Suyutī, Bughyat al-Wu'āt (pp. 123-124); Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1st ed., under al-Rāghib.

1. Muhādarāt, vol. I, p. 282:

«النَّاسُ فِي سِجْنٍ مَا لَمْ يَتَأَزَحُوا»

B. Persian

It should first of all be noted that in this chapter we shall deal with those poets and writers who can be termed "satirist" or "humorist" in the literal meaning of the words. Special reference has been made to those whom 'Ubaid has quoted as wits and humorists whether directly or indirectly; this restriction is necessary, for it is virtually impossible to name a single poet or adab writer who had not written a satire or coarse joke at the expense of an adversary. Even in the diwāns of the very pious, one finds satire and witty anecdotes of some sort. Poets such as Nāṣir Khusraw, or Ibn Yamin, whose decency and morality is beyond dispute, also wrote satire and employed humour in teaching ethical principles in satirizing either certain individuals or society as a whole.

Apart from those who are branded as humorists or satirists, even the ordinary and celebrated serious poets exploited humour and satire as an effective weapon. Kamāl-i Ismā'īl (d. 635/1237) writes;

Although writing satire is not a pleasant occupation
 God forbid that anyone lack the faculty to use it
 A poet who [by misfortune] is not a satirist,
 Is like a lion who has lost his claws and teeth. 1

Those poets who disapproved of satire but eventually employed it always excused themselves by maintaining that they were merely saving their skins, or deriving a livelihood from it. The poet and author who had nothing but the art of poetry or authorship, first used to write panegyrics in praise of the nobles of the age, and by that means

1. Adhar, Ātashkada, vol. III, p. 999:

مبادا کسی کالت آن ندارد	هجا گفتن ارچه پندیده نبود
پوشش ریت صیقل و دندان ندارد	هر آن شاعری کون باشد هجاگو

derive an income, but should the patron be unscrupulous towards the poet or writer and his merits, he would naturally turn to satire and indecent language. These generalities, no matter how fine, cannot, however, be demonstrated in all writers for a variety of reasons, each peculiar to the writer in question. However, the following is a list of those satirists who can be naturally said to have carried out the satirical tradition of Persian poetry up to 'Ubaid's time.

Rūdakī (d. 329/940). Persian biographers begin their history of Persian poetry with Rūdakī. This is not, however, because he was the first Persian poet, but rather the first whose poetry was regarded as both mature and prolific in the judgement of the later critics. He is regarded by his successors, such as 'Unsuri, Manūchihri and others, as the "master of the ghazal". 'Unsuri asserts (Diwān, p. 195) that, "the ghazal must be in Rūdakī's style, but alas mine are not like his." Rashīdī of Samarqand tells us that he had counted Rūdakī's poems and they came to more than 13 times one hundred thousand.¹ This is certainly a case of poetical exaggeration. Awfī himself after quoting the views of others expressed his own very cautiously: "It is said that his poetry has been summed up in a hundred books (daftars), but the responsibility [for the statement] lies with the narrator." But what has come down is no more than 804 couplets recorded here and there in the works of the critics. However, these surviving fragments demonstrate his excellent style of poem writing and buoyancy of expression.

1. 'Awfī, Lubāb, vol. II, p. 7:

شعرِ او را بر ستمِ مردم سیزده رَه صد هزار هم فردن آید 'ترا چونانکه کابل بستری

Turning to satire, it should be noted that his satirical poems are as mild as his lyrics; he is neither a coarse satirist nor an indecent poet. The height of his satirizing is that he calls his enemy's father a donkey, or reproaches his malefactor's mother of being engaged in a low-ranking profession:

Your donkey father used to make bricks!
And your mother play the tambourine
While the first read scripture by the tombs of the dead
The other played tabūrāk near the house of the people. 1

A good example of his scoffing (ṭanz) is the following fragment:

What point is there in bowing Mihrab-wise
While your heart is taken by Bukhārā and the beauties of
Ṭarāz?
While God accepts your love affairs
He certainly rejects the false prayer. 2

Bibliography: Sa'īd Nafīsī, Ahwāl wa Ash'ār-i Rūdakī (3 vols., Tehran, 1309, 1910, 1319); Awfī, Lubāb (vol. II, pp. 6-9); 'Arūdī, Chahār Maqāla (pp. 51-55); Furuzanfar, Sūkhan wa Sukhanwarān (pp. 18-26).

Sāhib b. 'Abbād (326-385/937-995). Abū 'l-Qāsim Ismā'īl b. 'Abbād al-Ṭālaqānī, well known as al-Sāhib (the Companion) and Kāfī al-Kufāt, was born in Ṭālaqān, a town of Iṣfahān in a noble house. In the year 359/969 when Abū 'l-Faḍl Ibn al-'Amīd, who was Sāhib's tutor and patron, died at Hamadān at the age of sixty, after being vizier for thirty-two years, the sovereign Rukn al-Dawla appointed his son Abū 'l-Fath

<p>1. مامات دف و دایره (داریه) صالاک زدی 2. دین بر در خانه هاتورا اک زدی</p>	<p>آن خردت بدشت خاشاک زدی آن بر سر گورها "تبارک" خواندی</p>
<p>دل به بخارا و بیان طراز از تو پذیرد نپذیرد ناز</p>	<p>روی بحراب نهادن چه شود ایزد ما و موی عاشقی ...</p>

to the vizierate. He was a gifted poet and writer, and remained in office until the year 366/976. In the latter year, however, Ṣāhib and 'Adūd al-Dawla successfully plotted to depose and imprison the vizier and confiscate all his possessions. From this time up to 385/995 Ṣāhib held the vizierate in great power and respect. Most biographers recorded him as being Shi'ite and Mu'tazilite. Although he was occupied with the state affairs, he never gave up reading and writing. According to Yāqūt his library consisted of 17,000 volumes of books. He compiled books and treatises, and Yāqūt has recorded 26 of his books, including an Arabic dictionary entitled al-Mūhīt (the Comprehensive).

Books of adab are full of his stories and parables, and almost every one of them admired him with the exception of Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī (d. ca. 400/1009) who wrote a book on his disgraceful conduct and that of his predecessor Ibn al-'Amīd called Akhlāq al-Wazīrain. Although Abū Ḥayyān was a great and prolific writer, the critics, however, do not justify all of what he has attributed to Ṣāhib. Tha'ālibī, Yāqūt, Ibn Khallikān and many others praised Ṣāhib with great admiration. Tha'ālibī, in particular, has said that he was unable to find words sufficiently laudatory to admire Ṣāhib!

Among Ṣāhib's literary achievements was his critique of the poetry of al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965) the great Arabian poet. Ṣāhib showed up those items plagiarized in the poet's Dīwān. He was a great admirer of Abū 'l-Faraj's al-Aghānī, and it recorded that whereas Ṣāhib used to take with him thirty camels loaded with books in his travels, when he received al-Aghānī, he was content to carry it instead of all the others.¹

1. Yāqūt, Irshād, vol. II, p. 214.

In regard to Ṣāhib's humour and satire, it should be noted that even those biographers who admired his character could not help but agree with Abū Ḥayyān that his nature was marked by a certain flippancy and shamelessness. It is recorded that all who used to visit him had to flatter him and attribute to him the best qualities of the other poets and writers, and should someone unfortunate dare to tell the truth in front of him, he would face the most indecent and harsh consequences. It is written that a man arrived to him from Syria, and in the course of conversation Ṣāhib asked him whose writings were the most popular in Syria. The man replied that they were the treatise of Ṣābī. Ṣāhib repeated his question, and the man mentioned another author. A member of the audience winked at him to mention Ṣāhib's name, but the man failed to understand the signal. Ṣāhib recognised that and uttered aloud: "Why do you wink at a senseless ass?"¹

One of the personalities with whom Ṣāhib was not on good terms was Qābūs Washmgīr (d. 403/1012) the Ziyarid, whose grandson Kaykāwūs wrote the famous adab book the Qābūs Nāma in Persian. Qābūs was a king, a man of letters, an excellent poet and a fine calligrapher. Ṣāhib used to ask when he saw the former's handwriting: "Is this the handwriting of Qābūs, or the feather of a peacock (hādhā khaṭṭu Qābūs am janāḥu ṭāwūs)?" Even so Qābūs satirized Ṣāhib and the latter replied in the same vein and the correspondence marks one of the coarsest episodes of Persian satires written in Arabic.

The following is one example of his witticism: The celebrated Badī' al-Zamān al-Hamadānī (d. 398/1007) relates that in the year 380/990 Ṣāhib gave audience for him and his father. When he entered

1. Yāqūt, Irshād, vol. II, p. 315.

in accordance with tradition he bowed down several times. Ṣāhib seeing him gesturing thus and said, "Sit down, boy! You look just like a hoopoo bird!"

Bibliography: Tha'ālibī, Yatima (vol. III, pp. 141-145); Yāqūt, Irshād (vol. II, pp. 293-313); Tārīkh-i Guzīda (pp. 412-415); Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt (vol. I, pp. 94-95); Aḥmad Bahmanyār, Ṣāhib b. 'Abbād (Tehran University, 1959).

'Asjadī (d. 432/1040). Abū Naẓar 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Maṣṣūr al-Marwazī better known as 'Asjadī, is regarded as one of the greatest Ghaznawid court poets. Dawlatshah numbers him among 'Unsurī's disciples, but this would seem impossible. It is recorded that he was a companion of Sultān Maḥmūd in his expeditions, and as a reward for writing a panegyric on the conquest of Sumanāt, the Sultān bestowed on him the sum of 100,000 dīnārs. Only about 10 couplets of this celebrated panegyrist has come down to us. It is said that his Dīwān consisted of three thousand couplets, but only 218 have survived, scattered throughout various adab books. Together with his mastery of the ghazal and qaṣīda, he was also a satirist and writer of facetiae.

Here we should, perhaps, dwell a little on the environment which surrounded this poet, and his contemporary fellow poets, and the conduct and morality of his patron, Sultān Maḥmūd. History tells us that Maḥmūd was an eminent conqueror, a very brave and patient man who used to patronise men of letters. Unlike the Samanids, however, he was an obedient agent of the caliphs of Baghdād and took common cause with them in terrorizing their enemies and those who carved the enmity of Baghdād. He was also a very rigorous and narrow-minded man, and perhaps for this reason found it difficult to tolerate the great literati and philosophers of his time such as Firdawsī and Ibn Sina, and to a

great degree al-Birunī. He was a great enemy of the Fāṭimites, Shi'ites and also the theologians and philosophers, dismissing them as "atheists", "irreligious" or bad-nadhhab. Many Sunnite scholars and poets, including Sanā'ī and Mawlawī admired him as the adamant defender of Islam. His flatterers even attributed a book to him called Tafrīd fi al-Furu', which according to them was an excellent example of its kind consisting of 60,000 problems concerning religious matters, and called him a first class jurist. But we also have another side to his character which is quite opposite to the former, for even those who admired him could not disguise the destructive side of his character. Ibn Athīr tells us,

There was nothing reproachable in him except his venality. Once when informed that there was a wealthy man in Nishābur, he summoned the man and accused him of being a Qarmatī. The man replied to the accusation, "Thus I am not a Qarmatī, but I have money. Take whatever you want and do not libel me. Thus he took a great sum of money and wrote a charter attesting to his good faith. 1

Secondly, he was a notorious pederast, of whom Awfī tells us,

Two of his ministers lost their lives for the sake of their pages. One of these was Aḥmad b. Ḥasan whose page (ghulām) was favoured by the sulṭān. However, the minister refused to surrender to the lust of his sovereign. The second was Abu al-'Abbās Ashqar whose page was called Rāmish. He refused too, and hence both were killed. 2

His love affair with Ayās b. Uymāq is also very famous, and this page's love story with Maḥmūd plays a great rôle in Persian lyric adab. His anecdotes can be found in 'Unṣurī, Chahār Maqala, Aṭṭār's mathnawis, Gulistan, Rumī's mathnawī and many others. 'Ubaid's multifarious

1. al-Kāmil, vol. IX, p. 401.

2. Jawāmi' al-Hikāyāt, vol. II, pp. 191-192.

anecdotes, too, refer to his homosexual predilections. Nizāmī 'Arudī, however, plays on words ironically in order to acquit Maḥmud of being involved with Ayās' physical love, but every man of sense knows that he was neither a deep thinker nor a world-denying sufi. Now, where the king and ministers were afflicted by pedereasty, it would not be strange if the books of history and the dīwāns of the poets of the period were full of homosexual indications and clear preferences for male over female. 'Asjadī, Manuchihrī, 'Unṣurī were among them; and therefore, together with satire their poetry contains certain elements of pornographic and indecent scenes.

Of the remaining poems of 'Asjadī, three of them are either facetious or satirical. The first is a very indecent description of 'Asjadī's violation of a boy; verses so coarse as to render them untranslatable. The second is satire about the poet's conversation with a furnace-stoker at a public bath. They hurl satirical words at each other, and at the end the worker overcomes the poet! The third is a somewhat mild and literary scoffing of a wealthy man:

Khwaja is great and possesses great monies,
But such monies and assets that nobody enjoys it:
His miserliness is so that he leaves no dirt
For the bath-attendant and no hair for the bleeder!

Bibliography: Awfī (vol. II, pp. 50-53); Dawlatshah (pp. 21, 54, 58); Jāmī, Bahāristān (p. 95); Rashīd Waṭwāt, Ḥadā'iq (pp. 147-150); Ḥājī Khalīfa, Kashf (vol. I, p. 219); Nafīsī, Ḥawāshī-i Qābūs-nāma, pp. 237-246.

Manuchihrī (d. 432/1040). Abu al-Najm Aḥmad b. Qaws known as Manuchihrī of Dāmghān was another poet of the Ghaznawid period. He first lived at the court of Falak al-Ma'ālī Manuchihr b. Qābūs (403-420/1012-1029), the Ziyarid king, and took his pen-name from him; there is,

however, no single couplet in his dīwān in praise of that king. Our knowledge about this poet is very limited, and it seems that he died at a young age, and perhaps for the very reason his poetry is neither mature nor developed enough, although his imagination is excellent. His second patron was Mas'ud of Ghazna (421-432/1030-1040) in whose service the poet entered when the former came to Gurgān and Ṭabaristān in the year 426/1034. Dawlatshah and Amīn Aḥmad Rāzī both number him among Maḥmūd's courtiers, but it seems that this is not true, and there is no note on Maḥmūd in his dīwān. He died in the year 432. Concerning his poetical talent, it is first of all worth noting that he was intimate acquainted with the Arabic poets and their dīwāns. Sometimes he merely translates the Arabic masterpieces into Persian in a peerless style where he keeps the same rhyme and some words of the original and still produces a work of great beauty in regard to Persian standards. His characteristic art is musammaṭ (a multiple poem) which normally begins with the description of spring or autumn, and although there is no high content in them, the rhyme and buoyancy of the words and phrases are amazing, and caress the ear like melodious music. He himself was aware of his artistry in this field as he writes:

Ṭāwus, madiḥ-i 'Unṣurī Khwānad
Durrāj musammaṭ-i Manūchihri.

The peacock reads 'Unṣurī's panegyrics
As the francolin Manuchihri's musammaṭs.

The content of his musammaṭs, however, are monotonous and lack variation to the extent that if one extracts the meaning from them all, it can be rendered as follows: the vine-keeper goes to the vineyard and after long conversation with the vines, is irritated and cuts their throats (takes the grapes), puts them together in a big jar, brings them to

his house, lays them in a wine-press and presses them underfoot, takes their blood and pours it into a large earthenware vat, fastens it, leaves it for three months. After three months, he again opens the lid of the jar, sees it glittering, takes a bowlfull and drinks it to his patron's health.

Concerning his satire, one should constantly bear in mind that he was a young poet living in a court in which wine-taking, pederasty and pleasure seeking were the norm. Therefore, he mocks those who blame drunkards and pederasts:

You told me that drinking wine is the cause of sin
Upon your sour soul! I only laugh at what you say!
Should all who imbibe wine commit a sin
Then sure Mecca and Yathrib are sinned in every day!
If vinegar is lawful, then why not wine, I ask,
For surely both these drinks are made in the same way.

He was attracted to males rather than females and openly acknowledges this, believing that committing such action should neither bring blame nor shame:

The wine cup and young boys I love
Therein I feel no cause for blame and censure
Well do I know that both have been forbidden
But only in forbidden things can I find pleasure. 1

Although satire has no great place in Manūchihri's poetry, he reacts to the contemporary literati who plotted against him, and he attacks them through satire. He first reproaches his literary foes by calling them stupid (sabukdil), hypocrite (tazwirgar) and dismisses his rivals' poetry as suitable for the cesspit.²

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1. غلام و جام می را دوست دارم — نه جای طعمه و جای حلام است
همی دانم که این هر دو حرامند — ولیکن این خوشی هادر حرام است
2. من گفتم که بر من نتوان دروغ بست
ای شاعر بسکندل بر من چه اوفتادت
نه قرص آفتابم نه ماه ده چواری
پنداشتم که عقلت بیش است و خوشی
زیرا که من را از دروغ گر نهاری
تا بر ریم بشورت چون باد بر صحرای (بر دهم؟)

Bibliography: Dīwān; 'Awfī, Lubāb (vol. II, pp. 53-55); Hidāyat, Majma' al-Fuṣahā' (vol. I, p. 543); Sukhan wa Sukhanwārn (pp. 134-151).

Abū Hayyān al-Tawhīdī (d. ca. 400/1009). He was born in Shirās. There is little information concerning his life to be found in the books of adab, save that he was an unhappy man during his lifetime. For two centuries after his death there is virtually no mention of him or his works. Yāqūt is apparently the first to attempt to give us a picturesque biography of him after collecting and studying almost all his extant works. "I have not come across," writes Yāqūt, "any biographer who would mention his name or quote him, and this is surprising indeed, because he is the head of the mystics, a philosopher among men of letters, and a man of letters among philosophers."

As far as we know for certain, he learned the literary arts from Abū Sa'īd al-Sairāfī (d. 368/978), and later attended the circle of teaching of the most knowledgeable man of his time, Abū Sulaimān al-Mantīqī of Sīstān (d. ca. 381/991). Here he became acquainted with Abū 'l-Hasan al-'Āmīrī (d. 381/991) and Ibn Miskawaih (d. 421/1030) and many others. He left Baghdād, perhaps in the year 370/980 for Rayy in order to meet Abū 'l-Faḍl b. al-'Amīd and Ṣāhib b. 'Abbād. But he was disappointed, partly because of his own difficult character, and partly because of the arrogance of these two viziers. He therefore wrote a book called Akhlāq al-Wazīrain (The Ethics of the two ministers), which because of its contents later renamed Mathalīb al-Wazīrain (The Disgraces of the two ministers) by scholars. After his return to Bagdad, he was recommended by Zaid b. Rifā' and Abū 'l-Wafā al-Būzjānī the mathematician to the service of Ibn Sa'dān better known as al-'Arīḍ al-Shīrazī (after his function as an inspector of the army). For him he began a work on friendship, al-Ṣadāqa, which was only finished,

however, thirty years later. History tells us that Ibn Sa'dān was appointed vizier to Ṣamṣām al-Dawla (d. 388/998) in 373/983. Abū Ḥayyān remained an intimate courtier of the vizier, attending almost all his evening receptions where he had to answer the vizier's different questions on multifarious topics including philosophy, theology, philology, literature and court gossip. His other works, i.e. al-Imtā' wal-Mu'ānasa and al-Muhādarat wal-Munāzarat, are mines of information on contemporary intellectual life, and they should prove an invaluable source for a reconstruction of the doctrines of the Baghdād philosophers.

Towards the end of his life Abū Ḥayyān became extremely bitter and disappointed and destroyed his own books, and thus according to al-Suyūṭī, "Whatever has come down to us from his works, belongs to his youth in which some copies already came into the hands of the people."

As for his satire we shall only mention his book Akhlāq al-Wazirain, although in all of his extant works we find bantering irony, satirical indications and facetious tales. As already noted, those who wrote about him, including Yāqūt, have unanimously condemned him for being bad-tempered and coarse-tongued. As for whether Abū Ḥayyān was satirical by nature, we refer to Yāqūt, who writes, "He was insatiable both when malevolent and benevolent; he was a satirist, his stock-in-trade was imprecation and occupation invective. He constantly complained of his circumstances, and throughout his writings he mourns his sufferings and disappointments."¹ He himself acknowledges his predilection for

1. Irshād, vol. II, p. 213:

« إِنَّهُ قَلِيلُ الرِّضَا عِنْدَ إِسَاءَةٍ إِلَيْهِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ: الدَّمُّ شَأْنُهُ وَالثَّلَبُ دَكَاةُهُ، يَشْتَكِي بِصُرُوفِ زَمَانِهِ وَيَتَكَلَّى فِي رِضَائِنِ فِيهِ عَلَى حَرَمَانِهِ. »

derision and satire, explicitly mentioning his motives for writing the above-mentioned book. He claims that he left Baghdād for Rayy, leaving behind his family and relatives in the hope that both Ṣāhib and Ibn al-ʿAmīd would appreciate his mastery and would evaluate his merits. But Ṣāhib looked down on him and disparaged his qualities, and thus he was moved to take revenge. Again he writes:

I suffered from him and in return he suffered from me. He attacked me with all his might, and I, too, retaliated by hurling at his head wrathful satire and invective; he deprived me of my rights and I did my best to find fault with him by means of cavilling and sharp criticism. He belittled me and I disgraced him; he made me the real target of disappointment and I libelled so as to really hurt him. But it is clear that the initiator is more ruthless, and the revenger more excused, and if he did not see me fitting of his generosity, I too, did not see him worthy of justice, and I therefore tried to uncover all his defects.

While it is impossible to judge the justice and merits of either of the two antagonists, we can form some idea of their characters: Ṣāhib was a very arrogant and conceited man. He pretended virtue, and used to attribute to himself qualities that in reality he lacked. Abū Ḥayyān on the other hand, with all his defects was a sensitive, well-read man, an excellent observer of contemporary events; he was disillusioned by defects and irrational attitudes of the authorities and was endowed with a vast knowledge and vocabulary which enabled him to express his feelings in the most effective way. It is understandable that such personalities should come to conflict. As a result, the book Akhlāq al-Wazīrain reveals Ṣāhib as a ruthless unashamed ribald (p. 45) and irreligious paramour (p. 60), a man whom Satan has touched and made insane (p. 103), a khālīʿ (shameless), a raqīʿ (rascal), having the features of a harlot (p. 113), an effeminate (p. 113) ill-humoured fool (p. 117), who was abusive (p. 122). In one place, he writes that

"It is recorded about his loose faith that he wrote a treatise in which he claimed that he was the expected hidden Imām" (p. 208). In another place, he quotes a poem of Ṣāhib's own, concerning his pederasty and fiery defence of Mu'tazilite doctrine (p. 214).

Bibliography: Yāqūt, Irshād (vol. II, pp. 211-70); Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt (vol. I, pp. 411-13); Suyūṭī, Bughyat (pp. 79-81); M. Qazwīnī, Sharḥ-i Hāl-i Abū Sulaimān Mantiqī Sijistānī (Chalon-sur Saône, 1933); Bīst Maqāla (vol. II, pp. 166-178); 'Abd al-Razzāq Muḥyi al-Dīn, Abū Hayyān (Cairo, 1949); and M. Kurd 'Alī, Umarā', vol. II, pp. 495-566); Akhlāq al-Wazīrain (Ribāt, 1965).

Azraqī of Herāt (d. ca. 465/1072). Abū Bakr Zain al-Dīn b. Ismā'īl-i Warrāq was born in Herāt. His father Ismā'īl Warrāq was a contemporary of Firdawsī, and when the latter escaped from Maḥmūd, he affected refuge to this the greatest of Persian poets, and thus gained the eternal gratitude of all scholars of Persian literature. Azraqī began writing poetry while he was still a young lad:

This old world does not produce young men the likes of me
Endowed high ambition, well-versed and yet unaged. 1

We know little of his early life. It is said that he admired two princes of the Saljūq dynasty, the first being Hūmām al-Dawla Amīrānshāh (d. ca. 476/1083), to whom he has dedicated two fine panegyrics; and the second, Shams al-Dawla Abū 'l-Fawāris Tughānshāh b. Ālb Arsalān, the Saljūqīd, for whom he wrote twelve panegyrics.

In poetry, Azraqī is a disciple of 'Unsūrī, but on occasions he claims superiority over his master. He pretends humble contentment

1. Dīwān, p. 51: جهان پر یمن کی جوان برون نآرد بلندفہمت و بسیار فضل و انکس سال

with the minimum requirement to sustain life lest he be drawn to praise the rabble and ignoble people; nevertheless it is mere pretence, and we do not know to whom he refers when talking of the ignoble (nākasān). He seems to have admired the dignitaries and the sovereigns of whom he spoke with hyperbolic praise, and nowhere in his works can the reader find admiration for the ordinary man and the poor.

However, we are here concerned with two works which have been attributed to him: firstly his versification of Sandbād Nāma and secondly his composition Alfiyya wa Shalfiyya. Of his Sandbād Nāma only fragments have survived in the collections of poetry, and as Ibn Nadīm tells us, this fine story comes from the pre-Islamic period (al-Fihrist, p. 314, Flügel). The authorship of his second work, which has not survived, has been doubted, but it is clear from Azraqī's other poems that such a work was written by him. The Alfiyya wa Shalfiyya (Browne believes "it should be Alfiyya-i Shalfiyya", vol. II, p. 323) is an illustrated work of pronography, where the text in verse serves as a commentary on scenes of grossly indecent pictures. This type of literature has its precedents in antiquity and especially in Diogenes the cynic and his followers. Again Ibn Nadīm tells us that the original text of the Alfiyya also came from the pre-Islamic period. Mamuchihrī living long before Azraqī was also aware of such a work, as we see in the following couplet:

In the light of your good fortune and high ambition
Your enemies are more shameful than the pictures of Alfiyya. 1

از جَدِّ نیکو رَایِ تو وز هِمتِ والایِ تو رسوا ترند اعدایِ تو از نقشِ هایِ الفیه 1.

Baihaqī, too, records that a work entitled the Alfiyya was written for Mas'ūd of Ghazna (d. 432/1040) while this sovereign was a youth living in Herāt in order to entertain him. The legend surrounding the composition of Azraqī's Alfiyya was that his patron Ṭughānshāh became impotent for a while, and the physicians of his court having failed to cure him, Azraqī offered to cure his problem with the aid of such a book. It is recorded that the resulting book had the designed effect on the sovereign. Azraqī consequently was held in greater esteem.

Some scholars tried to dispute the existence and authenticity of such a book and story, in particular of its being versified by Azraqī. The poet, however, indicates in his poems that he has written such a book. In this poem, Azraqī addresses his patron Amīrānshāh and reminds him, "If you let me, I would like to write a book whose significance would be outstanding and famous until the day of resurrection, and if you want any proof of my artistry in poetry you should ask for my famous book and read it, then you will recognise that a person who so gifted in composing base poetry would be also talented in the composition of graceful and elegant works."¹

Finally, whether the Alfiyya existed or not, and whether Azraqī was its author, are questions which are still disputed. However, the very fact that such a work should be attributed to a Persian poet marks the birth of a genre where the aim of composition is neither serious nor artistic. As such this doubtful composition is an important landmark in the development of facetious writing.

1. Diwān, p. 72:

که تا بجز معانی از او دهنتان
بس آن کتاب که من گفته ام بخواه بخوان
چو رایت بود عبادوی گدازه بیان

بنا م فرخ تو قصه بی تمام کنم
دلیل قوت طبع مرا در این معنی
کسی که راه کثر اندر سخن میان راند

Bibliography: Awfī, Lubāb (vol. II, pp. 86-88); Dawlatshāh, Tadhkīra (pp. 70-71); al-Fihrist (p. 314); Baihaqī, Tārīkh (pp. 121-122); Ibn al-Qiftī, Akhbār al-Hukāmā' (pp. 42-43); Azraqī, Dīwān (Tehran, 1957, ed. S. Nafīsī).

'Am'āq of Bukhārā (440-542/1048-1147). Amīr al-Shu'arā' Shahāb al-Dīn Abū 'l-Najīb 'Am'āq was born in Bukhārā in 440/1048. He is numbered among the greatest poets of Transoxania, but we lack information about his youth. His fame begins at the time he joined the service of Qarā Khān of the Khaniyya dynasty, and his fame gradually reached great heights so that even the poet Anwarī included his verse in his own poetry, calling him the "master of words" (ustād-i sūkhan).¹ The court of the Khidr Khān (d. 548/1153) in Samarqand was the gathering place of learned and men of letters. "Among them," as Niẓāmī 'Arūdī relates, "were Rashīdī the master, Amīr 'Am'āq and Najībī of Farghāna ... and Amīr 'Am'āq was the prince of the poets and enjoyed enormously great benefit in the service of that dynasty ... He is respected to the extent that other poets ought necessarily to serve him." We are also told that 'Am'āq versified the story of Yūsuf, which could be read in two distinct metres. We should not, however, rely on such a statement, because Dawlatshāh is the only one to have related it. His talent was in the composition of elegies whence he derived great material benefits and a position of honour above all other court poets. He was also a gifted satirist. Sūzanī, who was perhaps the coarsest of all Persian satirists, enumerates 'Am'āq among these satirists who could not match his own mastery:

هم بر آنگونه که است در سخن عمیق گفت
 'خاکِ خون آلوده ای باد به اصفهان بر'^{1.}

When I take to writing satire
 Thousands the likes of Manjik cannot surpass me:
 Khūjasta, Khwaja Najībī, Khaṭīrī and Ṭayyān,
 Qarī', 'Am'aq, and Ḥakkāk the monkey and babbler
 If they were living in my time
 Still only I could make this boast. 1

His satires are indeed coarse and abusive, and in this respect are only surpassed by those of Suzanī. He has coined many amusing and satirical words and phrases, or at least has given a satirical meaning to them; words such as rūy-i diw, kūn-i mugh, chāruq-i Iblīs, gurba-i a'war, sag-i arjal, khirs-i murda, ganda-baghal, jilf-i gahba zan, and so on. These phrases, which convey little in translation, are extremely effective in Persian, for besides being abusive they are fresh and original. We may observe how 'Am'aq uses these phrases in the following gīt'a which was composed when the king took away his favourite slave girl and presently sent to a Turkish slave called Ughul:

God and my king, they both command
 I am the obedient servant, a silent yes-man,
 But is it fair that such a dog should dare embrace
 My star-faced cypress dear, my tulip adorned sun?

Then he begins to describe the victim:

His face is like the devils, a magi's anus is his mouth
 He has an ear that's like a fan, an anus like a large
 milk-pail. 2

-
1. هزار منجیک از پیش من کم آرد پای
 قلع و شمع و حکاک و قرد یاوه درای
 مراستی ز میانان هم بدست درای
2. Dīwān, p. 170:
- من بنده مطیع و فرمان بر خورش
 سر و ساره عارض و نورشید لاله پیش
 گوشتی چو باد بزن و کونی چو گام درویش
- من آن گتم که چو کردم به جو کردن رای
 خسته، خواجه نجیبی، خطیری و طیان
 اگر بعد مندی و در زمانه من
- حکم ضای و حکم خداوند نافذ است
 لیکن شتم بود بکنای چنان سگ
 روی چو روی دیو و دهانی چو کون مرغ

* * * * *

Another contemporary poet of 'Am'āq whose satire is recorded even in the Chahār Magāla, was Rashīdī of Samarqand, whose full name is Tāj al-Shu'arā' Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Rashīdī. He lived at court with 'Am'āq, and like the other poets of the court he should have shown respect and obedience to the poet-laureate, but in this matter the latter was to be disappointed, for Rashīdī though still young, was nevertheless learned in his art. The Lady Zaynab was the special object of his panegyrics, and he enjoyed the fullest favour of the king. One day, in Rashīdī's absence, the king asked 'Am'āq, "What do you say of the verse of Rashīdī, the prince of poets?" "His verse," replied the other, "is excellent, being both chaste and correct, but it needs salt." When some time had elapsed, Rashīdī entered, and having made obeisance, was about to sit down. The King said, "I asked the poet-laureate just now what he thought of Rashīdī's poetry, and he replied that it was good, but wanted spice. Now you must compose a quatrain on this topic." Rashīdī with a bow, sat down in his place and improvised the following fragment:

You stigmatize my verse as "wanting salt",
 And possibly my friend, you may be right.
 My verse is honey-favoured, sugar-sweet
 And salt with sweetmeats cannot give delight.
 Salt is for you, you blackguard, not for me.
 For beans and turnips is the stuff you write. 1

1. Chahār Magāla, pp. 273-75:

علیب کردی روا بود شاید
 و نذر این دو نیک نگوئاید
 نیک ای قلیان تراشاید

شعرهای مرا به بی نکی
 شعر من هم پخته و قند است
 شلغم و باقلیه گفتند تو

Hearing this satirical answer the king was so delighted that he bestowed on Rashīdī four times 250 dīnars according to the tradition of the princes of Transoxiana. We thus see the king in this childish mischievous act and diverting money destined for the poor to the abusive poet.

Awfī attributed to Rashīdī a work entitled the Zinat-Nāma, but it would seem that such a work, if it indeed existed, would have been entitled the Zainab-Nāma (after the object of his poetic admiration), a correct form of an incorrect reading of the diacritical marks

Bibliography: Niẓāmī 'Arūdī, Chahār Maqāla (pp. 72-74); Suzanī, Dīwān (p. 200); 'Am'aq, Dīwān; Awfī, Lubāb (vol. II, p. 212). For detailed information on Khāniyya dynasty, see S. Nafisī, Ta'liqāt-i Tārīkh-i Baihaqī (vol. III, pp. 1160-1193).

Ṭayyān of Marv (fourth century A.H.). Ṭayyān (the maker of sun-dried bricks)-i Marghazī, best known as Zhāzh-khāī, lived in the fourth century. Originally from Marv, his poems are recorded in Farhang-i Asadī, written by Asadī of Ṭūs (d. 465/1072). His date of birth and death are unknown, and we know little of worth concerning his life. However, his reputation as a coarse satirist is frequently noted in the dīwāns of the poets. Sūzanī enumerates him among the satirists who are not able to match him in the field, and Sanā'ī mentions him as a ribald satirist in his condemnation of Ḥakīm Ṭālī'ī.¹ Pīghū Malik, the Saljūqid, a satirist himself, wrote the following couplet in praise of a noble man, placing Juhā's satires in the same category as Ṭayyān's zhāzh (nonsense).²

1. Ḥadīqa, p. 686: هر کجی ترقات او خوانند زار طیان جو موطه دانند

2. بردن تو خند گردن، چو مردی مقل بر هزارهای جوخی بر زارهای طیان

Bibliography: S. Nafīsī, Ahwāl wa Ash'ār-i Rūdakī (vol. III, pp. 1181-84); Farhang-i Asadī.

Manjik Tarmidhi (fourth century A.H.). Abū 'l-Hasan 'Alī b. Manjik, was born in Tarmidh. Like Daqiqi he lived in Chaghāniān in the service of Āli Muhtāj, who ruled over Transoxania during Samanid and Ghaznawid times. He admired two princes of this family, the first, Amīr Abū Yahyā Tāhir b. Fadl Chaghānī (d. ca. 327/938) and the second Amīr Abū 'l-Muzaffar Ahmad b. Muḥammad Chaghānī (d. 329/940).

Although he wrote a good amount of serious poetry, his fame rests mainly on his satire. Awfī wrote, "None could ward off his darts of invective or evade the net of his satire." The following are two samples of his satire:

That day we wanted to drink wine cup by cup
But when you came we only got half drunk
Of human kind in your *family* there's none who *have* escaped
The satire of Manjik which catches them one by one. 1

* * * * *

Oh master you're not the butt of my cheap wit
Rather you're the true test of my tremendous genius
Like the tempered blade tested on a dog
It is the cur which recommends the sword. 2

Bibliography: Awfī, Lubāb (vol. II, pp. 13-14); Waṭwāt, Hadā'iq al-Sihr (p. 53); Shams-i Qais, al-Mu'jam (pp. 324, 346-7); Nafīsī, Ahwāl wa Ash'ār-i Rūdakī (vol. III, pp. 1214-1216).

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1. مای بخواستیم زدن دوش جام جام چون تو بیامدی باندیم خام خام
از آدم اندرون ببارت کسی نماند کورا هم نگورده است منجیک نام نام
2. ای حواجه هرگز از هجا قصد تو نبود جز طبع خویش را برکردم آزمون
چونیک تیغ کش بگه آزمون کند و آن رگ تو به قمیم آن تیغ رهنمون

Anwarī (d. 585/1216). Awhad al-Dīn 'Alī b. Muḥammad Anwarī, was born in Badna, a small village in the district of Khāwarān of Tūs. Anwarī was his pen-name, and it is the name which the nobles of the court bestowed on him, but his previous takhallūs was Khāwarī. He himself employs the name Anwarī in most of his poetry. We do know neither his date of birth, nor much about his childhood and youth. It is said that the poet came to the court of Saljūq Sultan Sanjar (d. 551/1156) after having recited his first qasīda in praise of this monarch. Concerning Anwarī's position amongst the poets, we should note that poetry was not his greatest accomplishments, for he was not a simple poet or panegyrist; rather he devoted himself reluctantly to poetry, simply because he did not want to suffer the penury of scholars. He was acquainted with philosophy, music and astronomy, even if he was not a specialist in any of them. On many occasions he alludes to his considerable knowledge of these sciences, as in the following verses:

Of logic, music and philosophy I have a little acquaintance
 I speak the truth, I possess a good share of them
 In Metaphysic too, as much as a clear mind would believe,
 If you believe, me, I am quite skilled at commentary
 In mathematics, also, some problems have been solved by me
 in solitude.
 And in that no one could help me but God's grace,
 Also in Philosophy I am not less than Luqmān and Plato,
 If you do not credit me, dare to test me, for I am ready. 1

However, nobody would deny his mastery of poetry and to some extent his superiority in this realm. Even the great poets regarded

1. Diwān, vol. II, pp. 686-7:

منطق و موسیقی و حکمت شناسم اندکی	راستی باید بگویم بالنصیب وافریم
در الهی آنچه تصدیقش کند عقل سلیم	گر تو تصدیقش کنی بر شرح و تبیین هم
در ریاضی مشکلی چندم بجلوت حل شده	و در آت جز و اهاب از توفیق کس نه مایم
چون ز لغات و فلاطون غیتم کم اندر حکم	ارهی باور نداری رنج تو من صخرم

him as one of the landmarks of Persian literature. 'Awfī speaks of "his poetry as a miracle". Jāmī (d. 898/1492) considers him as a prophet in the field of panegyrics. Another poet claims that "he had truly pierced the pearl of justice".

The following giṭ'a ranks him along with Firdawsī and Sa'dī:

In poetry, there are three prophets
Though truly "there is no prophet after me"
All men are agreed in this one point
Firdawsī, Anwarī and Sa'dī excell in description
Ode and lyrics respectively. 1

Concerning Anwarī's ethical stance, and satirical predilection, one should bear in mind that at first glance it is hard to adopt a definite attitude with which to approach this poet. His works are marked by great variety. Sometimes he is content and regards contentment as an elixir, and the obligation of people as burden on the spirit; at other times he is inclined to make inordinate and insistent requests from his patron. Sometimes he tends towards philosophy and eschews poetry. While he admires virtue and reproaches unfaithfulness, when frustrated in his demands he is not averse to satirizing his patron, whom he had previously raised above all creatures. Sometimes he follows the path of merriment, and sometimes follows the path of extreme misanthropism. The following samples serve to illustrate the variance of his literary personality:

The earth-bound darts of Fate descending from the heavens,
Even should they bear the name of some other unfortunate,
Enquire before reaching the earth
The way to Anwarī's house. 2

-
- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. | در شرف ترین پیرانند | هر چند که "لانیج" بقدی |
| | ادفاف و قصیده و غزل | فردوسی و انوری و سعدی |
| 2. | هر بلایی که از آسمان آید | گر چه بردگی قضا باشد |
| | بزمین نرسیده می پُرسد | خانه انوری گجا باشد |

There is much critical satire in Anwarī's diwān concerning the shortcomings of society. His mockery of municipalities and the officers of law are of great importance; a theme which is later taken up by Sa'dī, Ḥāfiẓ and particularly 'Ubaid-i Zākānī.

Yesterday I saw an officer of the law on my way home
Who had taken a thorny stick in his hands
And was beating a beautiful woman
Whilst people were looking at them from the house-tops
I asked someone why the man was beating the poor woman with
a stick,
"This is a poor harlot," he replied, "while this man is a
person whose wife is a harlot." 1

In this qit'a the humorous poet puts his sharp criticism in the mouth of the people. There is an amphibology in this poem; because the word rūspī-zan has a double meaning: first the person who punishes prostitutes, and the other is a man whose wife is a prostitute. In his satires Anwarī does not even exclude himself, for he curses himself along with his ungenerous patron:

We praised an undeserving ingrate
From whom we saw no generosity
A fart in the beard of the eulogiser
A penis in the anus of the eulogised. 2

Bibliography: Awfī, Lubāb (vol. II, pp. 125-8); Dawlatshāh, Tadhkirā (pp. 94-98); Furuzānfar, Sukhan wa Sukhanwarān (pp. 332-56); Adhar, Ātashkada; Diwān (ed. Nafīsī); Diwān (ed. Mudarris Raḍawī); Ṣafā', Tārīkh-i Adabiyvāt (vol. II, pp. 512-519); Kirmānī, 'Iqd al-'Ulā' (p. 17); Browne, A Literary History of Persia (vol. II, pp. 365-385); A.J. Arberry, Classical Persian Literature (pp. 115-120); Hidāyat, Majma' (vol. I, pp. 376-8).

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1. دی محبتی براه دیدم بر دست گرفته چوب از زن
مهر و زنگی گرفته می زد نظاره بر او زبام و بر زن
برسیدم از آن میان یکی را کان چوب حوازند بدان زن
2. گفتار زنگیت روی این دآن محبتی است روی زن
مدح گفتیم ناسزای را زو نیامد پدید هیچ فتوح
تیز در ریش این چنین مایح که در کون آفتابان مدوح

Sanā'ī (473-535/1081-1140). Abū 'l-Majd Majdūd b. Ādam Sanā'ī is one of the greatest Persian mystic poets who besides excelling as a mystic, had great dexterity in the composition of satire. Born in Ghazna, we know very little of his life save that he was attached, during his earlier period, to the court of Bahrāmshāh the Ghaznawid (d. 552/1157). We know also that he was a contemporary of Mas'ūd-i Sa'd-i Salmān (d. 515/1121), 'Uthmān Mukhtārī (d. 544/1149), Sayyid Ḥasan Ghaznawī (d. 556/1160), Amīr Mū'izzī (d. ca. 520/1126), Anwarī (d. 585/1189) and Sūzanī. He was on good terms with 'Uthmān Mukhtārī and eulogized Mū'izzī, while he himself was satirized by Sūzanī. He died about 535/1140. He is the first of the three great mystical mathnawī writers of Persia (the second being Shaikh Farīd al-Dīn Aṭṭār and the third Jalāl al-Dīn Rumī) who, though by far the greatest, had the humility to write:

Aṭṭār was the face and Sanā'ī its two eyes
We came after Sanā'ī and Aṭṭār. 1

We come across another homage paid by Rumī to Sanā'ī. For example the following couplet:

An agitated Turk I am, and immature
Hence you should ask [the truth] from the Ghaznawid wise
(i.e. Sanā'ī). 2

Sanā'ī's work, as it has come down to us, consists of seven mathnawīs and a diwān. But we are here concerned with the most celebrated of his mathnawīs, the Ḥadīqat al-Ḥaqīqa (Garden of Truth). It is dedicated to Bahrāmshāh, his benevolent patron, Sultan of Ghazna. It is a moral

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- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. | ما از پی سنائی و عطار آمدم | عطار روی بود و سنائی چشم او |
| 2. | از حکیم غزنوی بشنو نام | ترکت جوئی کرده ام من نیم خام |

and mystical book of about 11,000 verses, divided into ten books, the first in the praise of God, and the tenth in praise of Bahrāmshāh. Sanā'i's bitter satire and coarse facetiae lie, however, in the ninth book, in which the poet discusses his own condition and circumstances. It is termed among the men of letters Qalandariyyāt (libertinisms).

Sanā'i's lifetime is usually divided by his biographers into two periods: the material and the spiritual. In the first period he did what he fancied and praised the nobles and experienced almost every forbidden pleasure such as wine-drinking, debauchery, pederasty and satirizing; in the second period he gave up all these enjoyments and escaped into the world of mysticism and abstemiousness. This, however, hardly seems a realistic description of his life, for even in the second period he did not abandon his satirical poetry. We know that he wrote the Hadīqa, his best known mathnawī, in old age and died almost immediately after its completion, and in this work we find his coarsest satire and facetiae.

Concerning his humour and satire, it must be said that it is not mere idle ribaldry as that of his contemporary, Suzanī, for it contains many critical and constructive elements. The striking point in the Hadīqa is that the poet denies that he is writing invective and coarse satire:

I have [great] ambition although I lack authority
There is no invective in my poetry. 1

He elsewhere gives thanks to God that the men of art prefer his satirical writing to the serious writing of others.² The following are examples of his satire:

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|----|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. | سخنِ فحشِ بزرگانم نیست | بِهَتِّمِ هِت اگَر چه پائِم نیست |
| 2. | هزلم از جِدِّ دیگران خوشتر | شکر گویم که نزدِ اهلِ هنر |

O donkey! I called you a noble man in my poetry
 In the hope that my affairs will be fulfilled by you
 You gave me an invalid note instead
 What results from my fraud except a fraud? 1

Three of his anecdotes have been taken up by 'Ubaid in his Joyous Treatise (Kulliyāt), pp. 90, 107, 125; see also the last chapter of this thesis).

His critical, but invective, satire covers almost all the social and individual defects, and in particular ethical bankruptcy: judges, mystics, jurists, physicians, astrologers and many other classes have been taken to account in his bantering satire. A few examples of his satire have been given throughout this thesis, and the following is an example in which he criticizes astrologers:

These astrologers are ignorant enough of the world's affairs
 There is no enlightened heart throughout their affairs

Astrology and mandal are nought but rubbish
 Only women might be dominated by such teachings

The words of a fortune-teller would have no benefit
 Those who measure the sphere are like those who measure the wind

The judgements of wind-measureers are totally baseless
 You should abandon their erroneous judgements

For there is no understanding in their work
 Rise and break wind on the astrologer's beard. 2

1. Diwān, p. 303:

که تا کارم ز تو کرد فروغی
 دروغی را چه آید جز دروغی

بشر اندر تو سر دم خواندم ای خر
 خطی نارا ایچم دادی و شدید

2. Hadīqa, p. 703:

نیت در کارش ن دل بیدار
 زن بود نغبه چنن تعلیم
 باد پیود کا سمان پیود...
 تو ز حق کام خیره دیت بدار
 خیز و بیدارش آن منجم تیر!

غافلند این منجمان از کار
 نیت جز هزاره مندل نیم
 سخن فالگو نذر ارد شود
 همه باد است حکم بادالگار
 نیت در کارش آن منجم تیر

Mandal is an enchanter's circle described on the ground, in which they sit when endeavouring to conjure up demons or spirits.

Bibliography: Sanā'ī, Dīwān; Ḥadīqa; Jāmī, Nafahāt al-Uns (p. 537); Furuzānfar, Sūkhan wa Sukhānwarān (pp. 253-260); Dawlatshah, Tadhkira (pp. 106-111); Browne, A Literary History of Persia (vol. II, pp. 317-322).

Khāqānī (520-595/1126-1198). Hassān al-'Ajam Afdal al-Dīn Badīl b. 'Alī of Shīrwān is regarded among the greatest of Persian qaṣīda writers. Born in Shīrwān, his father was a carpenter, and his mother a cook of Nestorian origin, and perhaps for this very reason there are many references to Christianity in his dīwān. We have insufficient information on his life, but we know for certain that his uncle Kāfī al-Dīn 'Umar b. 'Uthmān, himself a physician and philosopher, supervised Khāqānī's education. It seems that his father was not content to allow his son to occupy himself with poetry, and there are implicit indications in his works that our poet was vexed by his father's insistence that he should occupy himself with carpentry. Khāqānī, therefore, satirized his father. At the end, however, his uncle pleaded his case and the young poet was allowed to devote himself to poetry. Thus, Khāqānī regards the uncle as his real father:

Oh Khāqānī weep blood upon your uncle's death, not tears
For that uncle has shown himself a true father to you. 1

He lost his uncle when he was twenty-five years of age, whereupon he visited Nizām al-Dīn Abū 'l-'Alā', the poet laureate in the court of Manūchir Shīrwānshāh, who was to introduce him to the prince. He was given the pen-name (takhalluṣ) of Khāqānī by the prince. The laureate later gave his daughter in marriage to Khāqānī and provided him with

1. خانا یا بایم عم خون گری نه انکت کاسین عجم بجای تو پدرها نموده بود.

considerable financial aid, as we see in the following couplet of Abū 'l-'Alā':

On you have I heaped innumerable blessings
I gave to you wealth, fame and my daughter dear. 1

However, it was not long before father and son-in-law fell out and began to satirize each other, and it seems the initiator was Khāqānī. The cause of this is not known. But it would appear that Khāqānī had gradually acquired mastery in poetry naturally enough his contemporary fellow-poets envied him including perhaps Abū 'l-'Alā', although we have no evidence to confirm his jealousy. Khāqānī, too, was very proud of his ability to the extent of openly belittling Mu'izzī, Jāhiz, 'Asjadī, Rūdakī and 'Unsurī.²

At any rate, he satirized Abū 'l-'Alā', and the latter, in his turn, satirized the former (Chapter I, p.41). Hence, generally speaking, Khāqānī should be ranked among satirists. But it would be unfair to place his satire in the same category as that of Suzanī, or even Sanā'ī. His satires are not as coarse or bantering as those of his two predecessors. He tells us that "the enemy provoked my invective in order to force me to satirize him, and the more he tries to satirize me, the more will I try to praise him in order that each of us may demonstrate his nature."³ He however, in common with many other Persian

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1. بجای تو بسیار کردم گویی * * * ترا دختر و مال و شهرت بدارم
2. اگر مرغی و جاحظ بروزگار مندی * * *
ش عریضی منم خوان معانی تر است *
به نظم و نثر هانا که ریزه خوار مندی
ریزه خوار خوان من هم عنصری هم رودی
3. Diwān, pp. 905-6:
تا بد گفتن او پیش آیم * * *
من از آن پیشتر بستم *
من بدگوهر خود بنام * * *
نیک بد گفتن من پیش گرفت *
هر چه او پیشتر م بگوهد *
او بمن گوهر خود بپزده است *

poets does not keep his words, and has no doubt in calling his jealous adversaries "bastards". He also denounces philosophy and philosophers as "effeminate". Perhaps his bitterest satire is on Rashīd al-Dīn Waṭwāt whom he calls cat-eyed (gurba-chasm), dog-like, effeminate, pagan, the whelp at his door, the dog's penis and so forth.¹

The following is a satire on his father 'Alī, the carpenter, which was presumably written in his youth:

What a rascal I have for a father
It seems God created him from fire!

His nature is sharper than his chisel
His temper is as cutting as his saw!

Though I am the best product of this world,
He is ashamed of my knowledge and intellect.

Wishing that Khāqānī should be a weaver
Rather than a man of letters

Though my soul has been sore tormented
By his crude and incongruous words

He is however, God's appointed guardian of my livelihood
So therefore God preserve him from the world's disasters. 2

Bibliography: Dīwān; Dawlatshāh, Tadhkira (pp. 88-94); Nafisi, "Sharwān yā Shirwān", Majall-i Armaghān (year 5, Nos. 9-10); Hidāyat, Majma' (vol. II, pp. 200-202); Khāqānī, Tuhfat al-'Irāqain; 'Imād al-Kātib, Tārīkh Dawlat al-Saljuqiyya (pp. 183-184).

1. Dīwān, pp. 173-4:
سگ رکت نمیشد زشت کا فرکت
این بوزینه ریخت پنهان منتظرکت

این گربه چشمت این غوری غرکت
خفتکت زند بو بوزینه، چنکت زند بو خورکت

2. Ibid., p. 892:
کز آتش آفرید جهاندارش
هم خوی او برنده بو دمنش رش
آید ز فضل و عظمت من عارش
تا این سخنوری بندی کارش
جان و دلم ز خای گفارش
یارب ز نایبات مگردارش

زین خام قلیبان بدری دارم
هم طبع او بو دمنش تراشده
با آنکه بهترین خلف دهرم
کای کاش بولاستی خاما نی
با این همه که لوخته و بخته است
اونا نب خداست به رزق من

Sūzanī (489-569/1095-1173). Tāj al-Shu'arā' Muḥammad b. Mas'ūd Suzanī, is without reservation, the coarsest satirist Persia has ever produced. His father, too, was a poet-satirist. Born in Nasaf (or Nakhshab in Persian) he claims that he came from the home of Salmān-i Pārsī, the Prophet's pious and respected Persian companion.

Oh King! take me back to the piety of Salmān
For, I understood through my father that I come from Salmān. 1

In another satire on his enemy, Suzanī writes:

Your origin goes back to Caesar's dog-keeper
While mine goes to Salmān, the Prophet's keen companion. 2

We do not possess any sure information about his early life. Only that it is clear that he travelled from Nakhshab to Bukhārā in order to obtain an education, and as far as we can see from his Diwān, this does not go beyond the tradition, adab and genealogy; and in fact no Persian poet was so knowledgeable of the genealogies of the nobles of his age as Suzanī was. Hence, this enabled him more to write his bitter satires. The literary tadhkīras tell us that during his time in school he came across an apprentice of a manufacturer of needles (sūzangar) and fell in love with him, and subsequently went to the master and asked him to teach him the art. In his diwān he tells us about his admiration for a hat-maker's apprentice, and about his love for a soldier boy. However, his occupation as a needle-maker or milliner seems inconsistent with his career as a court-poet.

Among Suzanī's patrons three characters are better known: first, Arsalān Khān Muḥammad b. Sulaimān of Khāniyya dynasty who ruled during

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1. به زهد سلمان روان مرا ملک (یارب) چو یافتم ز پدر گز نژاد سلمانم
2. تو از نژاد و نحمه سگبان قیصری من از نژاد سلمان یار پیبرم

495-524/1101-1130; the second Sanjar b. Malikshāh who ruled from 511-552/1117-1157, and the third is Ātsiz b. Muḥammad (524-551/1129-1156).

Suzanī was a contemporary of 'Am'āq, Anwarī, Najībī, Dihqān Alī Shaṭranjī, Sanā'ī, Adīb Ṣābir of Tarmīdh, Nizāmī of Ganja and some other minor poets. He has cruelly satirized Sanā'ī but regarded Anwarī and Rashīd Waṭwāṭ with some respect. His other contemporary poets were afflicted by the great misfortune to have lived in this period. He replied to their poems, especially those of Sanā'ī and Mu'izzī and then satirized them. However his greatest involvement was with a poet called Khūm-Khāna. The other name of this victim was Jalālī or Ḥakīm Jalāl who was of Christian origin. This mutual satirizing lasted a long period, and at least one-third of Suzanī's diwān is devoted to satires on Ḥakīm Jalāl.

Concerning his satire, this poet is a loyal follower of Abū Nuwās, whom he regards as his master. He writes that he followed this path because he dreamed that Abū Nūwās ordered him to satirize everybody whether young or old. In another qasīda he writes that if he were to avoid making love to boys, then he would lose the honour of embracing on a pilgrimage to Abū Nuwās' dust!¹ He sometimes compares himself with Jarīr. His "constant companion was Ṭayyān's facetiae, or Ḥakkāk's pornographic booklet." He has coined many satirical phrases and compounds which regardless of their invective meaning, are of high quality and great elegance.

1. Diwān, pp. 58-60; pp. 97-8:

”نکتِ التَّنِیْکِ بِاِذْنِیْ وَ اِنْ یَکُنْ اَبَاکُ!”

مراجوب نموده است بونواس چنین

*
گر نَبَرَم بَار، رَه نَبَرَم بِعَلَفَرَار
از مشرفِ ضاکِ بونواسم بَرَار

*
من خر پریم بکاروانِ لواطه
کُونِ یَکِی کُودَکِ از دُرستِ بَانَم

His satires on Sanā'ī presumably come from Sanā'ī's satire-writing, for as the following poem indicates, Suzanī believed that Sanā'ī was an excellent panegyric-writer but not a satirist, and he hoped that Sanā'ī would leave writing satire to him:

Oh Sanā'ī come and bow low
Save yourself from the blast of my trumpet,
To praise has been bestowed on you
Surrender then all satire which is mine. 1

However, such a proposition was hardly likely to appeal to Sanā'ī, for Suzanī also wrote panegyrics and we may presume that Sanā'ī therefore regarded himself entitled to continue to write satire. Moreover, it was held as a commonplace that "a poet without satire was like a lion without claws."

His satire on Nizāmī of Ganja, which occurs in his diwān nine times, too, is very coarse indeed. It emerges from Suzanī's indications that Nizāmī was a proud and even arrogant poet, boasting always that his origin goes back to the Sassanids and also he led an extravagant and princely life with Greek and Caucasian slave-boys and girls, although none of this is recorded in Nizāmī's own poetry. He thus satirizes the famous mathnawī writer for his being a flamboyant pretender, an outrageous infidel and so unscrupulous that because of his existence none may spend a happy day.²

1. Diwān, p. 402: باد بوق مرا بگون کیم کن
همو گفتن بمن مشتم کن

2. Diwān, pp. 88-9:

نر نژاد ملوک سامان
نه مرا اسب و طوق سلطان
نه کنیزان برزی و خانی
داشتم من بر آن گل آرزانی
شوه گمگی باش خواب مان
هیچکس خلق را تن آسانی
آن پو بود بکر در میان

ای سنائی بیا و قد خیم کن
مدح گفتن مشتم است ترا

من یکی شاعرم نه سامان
نه مرا باد و هشت میری
نه غلامان روی و خیزی
این همه باد و باران و دلا
تیز در ریش و تلبت آن گل
نه هد از رخ آن گل کافر
جز مظفر مجیر دین بود بکر

The following is perhaps the best of his nine satires on Nizāmī:

Though Nizāmī is still alive, I imagine him as dead
Through composing his elegy I fulfil my poetic right

For, if I wait for him to die and thereupon lament him
He would not hear it, and what then would be the point?

I will therefore write an elegy so fine
That he should wish to die right now

I utter a thousand imprecations upon Nizāmī and his verse
Both in my sleep and in my waking hours

One of my best deeds throughout my life
Was to torment this evil-doing cur. 1

Suzanī's own words are enough to suggest that his life, to put it mildly, was open to criticism and reproach, and he actually acknowledges this in a very fine poem of which the following two couplets are fairly famous:

I trod in the path of Devil, I was snared in the Devil's gin
Till my evil conduct made me to surpass the Devil in sin!

I spent no single day without committing a sin
As if not committing a sin, seemed to me a sin! 2

His biographers, such as Awfī, Mustawfī and Dawlatshāh, tell us that this most ribald of all Persian poets, in his old age composed a penitential poem, and God pardoned him, and indeed those poems of his

1. Diwān, pp. 63-4:

بنظم مرثیہ حق طبع بگزارم
چون نشنود که چه گویم چه بود گفتارم
چنانکه در دل او آرزوی مرگ آم
اگر چه باشم در خواب و گرچه بیدارم
که آن سگ بد بد فعل را بازارم!

نظامی را چه نموده است مرده انگارم
چه گر بمیرد و آنگاه مرثیه گویم
لطیف مرثیه پیش او فرو گویم
هزار لعنت بر شعر و بر نظم می بار
یکی ز خجده کردارهای نیک من نیست

2. Diwān, pp. 170:

دزدیو دلیو ترشدم از سیرت بیا.
گوئی که بی گنهی بود نزد من گناه.

رفتم براه دیو و قاتل دم بدم او
یک روز بگنایه نبودم بفرخوش

old age show clearly that he had changed his attitude towards poetry. Finally, it must be said that although Suzanī was the most eminent satirist among the Persian poets, his satires, however, lack the humour and witticism of Anwarī, and particularly ‘Ubaid-i Zākānī, and even the fresh and delectable witticism of his acknowledged master, Abū Nuwās.

Bibliography: Dīwān; Awfī, Lubāb (vol. II, pp. 191-194); Mustawfī, Tārīkh-i Guzida (pp. 733-34); Dawlatshāh, Tadhkirā (pp. 111-115); Furuzānfar, Sukhan wa Sukhanwarān (pp. 315-319).

Mawlawī-i Rūmī (604-672/1207-1273). Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Mawlawī, better known in the west as Rūmī, is among the four or five greatest poets Persia ever produced. Born to a noble family in Balkh in 604/1207, his father Muḥammad b. Husain known as Bahā’ al-Dīn Walad, was among the great mystics of his age, who enjoyed great celebrity and respect. Because of his increasing fame and perhaps because of some religious differences, he became the subject of Sultan Muḥammad Khwarazmshāh's jealousy and hatred and was consequently forced to migrate westwards from his homeland. He went through Baghdād to Mecca, thence to Malāṭīyya, and travelled throughout Asia Minor for almost ten years before accepting an invitation from ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Kōiḡūbād Saljuqī to settle in Qunya. He accepted the invitation and in Qunya he occupied himself with teaching and the guidance of his followers and disciples, and finally died in 628/1230.

It was during this journey that Bahā’ al-Dīn and Jalāl al-Dīn both visited Shaikh Farīd al-Dīn Aṭṭār of Nishāpur, and the latter took the little Jalāl al-Dīn in his arms and prophesied his greatness in the future and gave him his blessing and a copy of his celebrated mathnawī Ilāhī-Nāma.

Jalāl al-Dīn seems to have studied the current Islamic sciences of his period mainly with his father until the latter's death, then from his father's former disciple Shaikh Burhān al-Dīn of Tarmīdh (d. 638/1240), and later on from his most favourite spiritual guide Shams al-Dīn of Tabrīz. His introduction to Shams al-Dīn took place in 642/1244 and it was to prove an extremely fruitful acquaintanceship for the nourishment of Rūmī's spiritual achievement. The Diwān-i Shams is the product of this period of companionship. In 657/1258 he appointed Ḥusām al-Dīn Chalabī (d. 684/1283) as his spiritual successor. It was at the request of the latter that Rūmī wrote the Mathnawī. Rūmī died in Qunya in the year 672/1273 at the age of sixty-eight.

Both his Mathnawī and his lyrical Diwān are poetry of a very high standard according to both Western and Persian scholars. Our concern, however, is with another aspect of Rūmī and his Mathnawī, that is the satirical, for although he is the most eminent figure of all Persian mysticism, his humorous qualities are not less than his serious ones and he mingles the serious and the playful throughout the six books of the Mathnawī, and the culmination of facetiae and humour come together in the sixth book. "It contains," as Browne noted, "a great number of rambling anecdotes of the most various character, some sublime and dignified, others grotesque and even (in our ideas) disgusting."¹ If however, the ordinary reader finds it indignified and "disgusting", the author has the reverse idea. He believes that his Mathnawī is "the market place of unity", i.e. pantheism (dukān-i waḥdat). He himself was to comment, "A perfect poet or orator has to be like a cook on whose table

1. A Literary History of Persia, vol. II, p. 520.

every kind of food must be prepared in order that everybody can find something to his liking."¹ Accordingly he provides a good variety of literary delicacies for the serious-minded people, but does not neglect to also provide a playful and humorous diet. He uses satire and facetiae as the vehicles for explaining his sublime mystical views; hence it is not strange that even atheists can find in it something compatible with their views.

Like his predecessors Sanā'ī and 'Aṭṭār, to some extent, he believed that "facetiae is teaching to be treated as serious." He writes:

Hazl is teaching you should treat it as serious
And you should not be deceived by its facetious appearance,
Any serious speech is a playful on the tongue of the facetious
While the facetious is serious from the mouth of the wise man. 2

A rough count would suggest that the Mathnawī contains eighty-nine facetious or playful anecdotes in about 1,000 couplets. Twenty-one of the anecdotes and approximately 293 couplets are in the sixth book. 'Ubaid quoted three of these anecdotes in his Risāla-i Dīlgushā (Kulliyāt, pp. 99, 108, 129). As is mentioned above he mingles serious with playful. For instance, no subject matter is more serious than life on earth, and nothing more dreadful than death. But here, too, Rūmī does not abandon his humour; to explain the priority of life to death, he writes:

1. Mathnawī, Book 3, p. 311:

بر سرِ خوالش ز هر آشی بُود
هر کسی باید غذایِ خود جدا

2. Ibid., Book 2, p. 238:

تو مشو بر ظاهِرِ هر زلِش گرد
هر لُها جد است پیشِ مملکت

ناطقِ کاملِ چو خوانباشی بُود
تا نماند هیچِ دلت به نوا

هر ل تعلیم است آنرا جد نشو
هر جدی هر ل است پیشِ هازل

I am content to cling to life if only with half a soul
And to watch the world from the anus of a mule! 1

Bibliography: Mathnawī (ed. 'Alā' al-Dawla); Furuzānfar, Badī' al-Zamān, Sharḥ-i ḥāl-i Mawlānā (Tehran, 1932); Nicholson, R.A., Rūmī, Poet and Mystic (London, 1950); Furuzānfar, Badī' al-Zamān, Risāla dar Taḥqīq-i Ahwāl wa Zindagāni-i Mawlānā (Tehran, 1945); Iqbāl, 'Abbās, Tārīkh-i Mogol (pp. 534-36); E.G. Browne, A Literary History of Persia (vol. II, pp. 520-24).

Sa'dī (d. 695/1295). Abū 'Abdallāh Mushrif al-Dīn b. Muṣliḥ Shirazī, known as Sa'dī or Shaikh Sa'dī, was born in Shirāz at the beginning of the seventh century A.H. His family were all learned in the religious sciences, and were famous for piety and abstemiousness²; and he himself was accustomed to prayer and early-rising.³ Sa'dī after having begun his education in Shirāz, left for Baghdād, and there entered Nizāmiyya school, in order to complete his studies. Here, he visited the celebrated masters of the time, in particular, Abū 'l-Faraj b. al-Jawzī (d. ca. 639/1241) and Shahāb al-Dīn 'Umar b. Muḥammad al-Suhrawardī (540-632/1145-1234). After completing his ordinary studies, he began travelling through Syria, Asia Minor and North Africa.

He observed with great enthusiasm the merriments and sufferings of the peoples of his era and accumulated considerable experiences, and then in 654/1256 returned to Shirāz and served in the court of the

1. Ibid., Book VI, p. 593:

راضیم کز من باند نیم جان تا ز کون استری بینم جهان

2. Kulliyāt, p. 286:

هم قبیله من عیان دین بودند مرا معلم عشق توش عری آمرخت

3. Kulliyāt [Gulistān], p. 41:

« یاد دارم که در ایام طفولیت متعبد بودی و شب مغیر و موله زهد و پرهیز... »

Atābakān dynasty of Fārs and took his pen-name from Atābek Abū Bakr b. Sa'd b. Zangī (d. 658/1259) and gained the respect and the favour of this dynasty. After the Mongol conquest of Fārs, Sa'dī left for Mecca. On his return, through Asia Minor, Sa'dī arrived at Azarbaijān and found access to the presence of Shams al-Dīn Juwainī (d. 683/1284) and his brother 'Aṭā Malik (623-681/1226-1282) and was well-received by both viziers. He spent the remaining part of his life in Shirāz and died there in the year 695/1295, and was buried in his own convent (khāniqāh) near the waters of Ruknābād.

Concerning his poetry and prose-writing it suffices to say that no Persian writer enjoys to this day, not only in Persia, but wherever this language is cultivated, a greater celebrity or a wider reputation. His style of writing, especially in Gulistān (Rose-Garden) has been imitated by many famous men of letters such as Majd al-Dīn Khwāfī in Rawḍa-i Khuld, Jāmī (d. 898/1492) in Bahāristān, Mu'in al-Dīn Juwainī (eighth century A.H.) in Nigāristān, Qāānī (d. 1270/1853) in Parīshān and many others; but none was able to match it, and it would therefore seem that he was justified in his boast that "Prose writing and poetry is a territory possessed by Sa'dī", and in fact so long as Persian is a living language, the last criticism of Sa'dī will remain unwritten. Although mysticism dominated the literature of the period, Sa'dī was not, however, completely spiritual, and as Browne noted, he "represents on the whole the astute half-pious, half-worldly side of the Persian character ... and the Gulistān in particular is one of the most Macchiavellian works in the Persian language" (vol. II, p. 525). This Macchiavellian aspect is well explained in the eighth chapter of Gulistān where he advises the king "to destroy without mercy those who are afraid of *him* because when the cat is cornered, it will scratch out the eyes of the leopard."

Apart from 'Ubaid no classical Persian writer wrote so many critical anecdotes, poems and parables including many satirical and facetious tales. It may therefore be said that he was the closest forerunner for 'Ubaid. In fact 'Ubaid has criticized him implicitly here and there in his works, especially in the Ethics of Aristocracy, and in particular his very famous statement, "An expedient falsehood is preferable to a mischievous truth" ('Ubaid's Kulliyāt, p. 150; Gulistān, p. 9).

His satirical and facetious writing including his three mock homilies of incredible coarseness (khabīthāt) and obscene poems (hazliyyāt), which are usually omitted in official editions of his Kulliyāt, together with the fifth chapter of Gulistān, "On Love and Youth", have been criticised and regarded as non-ethical. There are humorous tales recounted in the adab books concerning his relations with other men of importance. 'Ubaid quotes the tale of him and Quṭb al-Dīn Shirāzī (Kulliyāt, p. 106) and Dawlatshāh (Tadhkirā, p. 255), one of him and Humān-i Tabrizī (d. 715/1315).

Bibliography: Muḥammad Qazwīnī, Sa'dī Nāma (Tehran, 1937); Sa'dī, Gulistān (ed. and prefaced by Muḥammad 'Alī Furughī, Tehran, 1937); Browne, A Literary History of Persia (vol. II, pp. 526-40); Sa'dī, Gulistān (ed. by 'Abd al-'Azīm Garakānī, Tehran, 1931).

Majd-i Hamgar (d. 686/1287). Majd al-Dīn Hamgar originally came from a noble family of Yazd. He used to think himself as belonging to the Sassanid dynasty, and in his poems he always takes great pride in his belonging to that dynasty.¹ He spent most of his poetical life

1. عیبم همین که نیستم از نطفه حرام
جرم همین که زاده ام از زنبیل حلال
هستم ز نسل پادشاهان تر تخته نگین
هستم ز صلب کسری تر دوده بنال

in the service of Sulghurid Atābeks of Fārs, and Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad, the *governor* of Isfahān and the son of famous Shams al-Dīn Ṣāhib Diwān (d. 683/1284). He was a contemporary to Imāmī of Herat (d. 686/1287) and Sa'dī, and is appreciated as a writer of qaṣīdas.

Concerning his humour and satire, it should be noticed that he was a renowned jester. There are five anecdotes about him in 'Ubaid's Joyous Treatise, two of which are also recorded in the Tārīkh Guzida. Mustawfī speaks of "his humorous tales", and after quoting the anecdote below, writes that "they asked Sa'dī who had got the upper hand in poetry: Imāmī of Herāt or Majd-i Hangar?" Sa'dī answered:

Hangar who has never said a prayer in his life
Can surely not match the merits of Imāmī. 1

Mustawfī gives us the following anecdote about Hangar:

Majd-i Hangar had an old wife, whom he left in Yazd. However, she came to Isfahān, and while Hangar was teaching his students, one of his disciples entered the room and said, "I have got good news for you; your wife has come from Yazd and is now in your house." Hangar replied, "It would be good news if you were to tell me that the ceiling had fallen on her head."

This remark was reported to his wife, who reproached Hangar with the following words, "We have both lived many nights and many days," to which Hangar replied, "You may well have spent many nights and days, I certainly haven't."

Bibliography: Tārīkh Guzida (pp. 749-752); Dawlatshāh, Tadhkīra (pp. 119, 123, 184-5, 196-7, 201, 242); Iqbāl, Tārīkh-i Mogul (p. 537); 'Ubaid, Kulliyāt (pp. 135, 152).

‘Adud al-Dīn al-Ijī (d. 756/1355). ‘Adud al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Ahmad al-Ijī, theologian and philosopher, whom we will discuss at length in the following chapters. Very little is known of his life, except that as Kutbī relates, he held the post of qādī for many years in Shirāz at the time of Abū Ishāq Injū, and became the mediator between the latter and his rival Mubārīz al-Dīn the Muẓaffarid, and he is reported to have failed in his mission. As his name implies, he was a native of Ij, a fortress in Fārs. Ḥāfiẓ speaks of his being a great authority and respected teacher, too. He died in 756/1355.

His principal work is al-Mawāqif fī ‘Ilm al-Kalām, a philosophical and theological book which has been introduced to Europe through T. Sorensen, who has published two chapters from this work. Al-Ijī also wrote a brief catechism known as al-‘Aqā’id al-‘Adudiyya, which has been the basis for several commentaries. But as we are concerned with his humorous aspect, it should be noticed that neither of these two books nor his other less celebrated treatises reveal the humorous side of his character, and we can only observe it through ‘Ubaid, who has depicted it for us in his Risāla-i Dilgusha. It is notable that the humorous aspect of this celebrated man does not show itself in his writings which are quite bereft of humour.

The picture which ‘Ubaid depicts of him is in sharp contrast to the overall impression created by his writings. ‘Ubaid presents him as a great enemy of despotism, fanaticism, a libertine of noble rank, a somewhat facetious jester and a great mocker. His name occurs nine times in ‘Ubaid's above-mentioned book (Kulliyāt, pp. 108, 110, 112, 116, 131, 135, 139, 147, 150). In the following three chapters, more examples of his critical outlook on his society have been given, the following being an example of these:

Mawlāna 'Aḍud al-Dīn was hiring a Turkish servant for a certain price. The boy's father, however, was not satisfied with the price; but in the end he was satisfied saying, "I accept the offer provided you should allow him to take other work in order to enable him to earn some extra money besides his agreed wage." "But in our house there is no work only discussion," replied 'Aḍud al-Dīn.

Bibliography: Mu'in al-Dīn Yazdī, Mawāhib-i Ilāhiyya dar Tārīkh-i 'Al-i Muzaffar (ed. S. Nafīsī); Q. Ghani, Baḥth dar Athār wa Afkār wa Ahwāl-i Hāfiẓ (pp. 21, 29, 75, 99); 'Ubaid, Kulliyāt; Encyclopaedia of Islām, under al-Idjī.

Quṭb al-Dīn Shirazī (d. 710/1310). Maḥmūd b. Mas'ūd b. Muṣliḥ, better known as 'Allāma-i Shirazī, or Quṭb-i Shirāzī, was born in 634/1236 in Shiraz and died in Tabriz in 710/1311. He is regarded as the greatest scholar of the seventh and early eighth centuries in Persia, with the sole except of Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī (d. 672/1273). His fame rests mostly on his being a man of medicine, but at the same time he distinguished himself as an astronomer, a philosopher and finally a traditionist. He belonged to a prominent family of physicians, his father Diyā' al-Dīn Mas'ūd (d. 648/1250) being an experienced physician who treated the sick in the Muzaffarī hospital of Shiraz.

After studying medical sciences he left Shiraz for Khurasān, Iraq, Asia Minor, and attended Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and solved some of the difficulties of Ibn Sīnā's al-Qānūn fi al-Ṭibb. In Qunya he attended the circle of Ṣadr al-Dīn Qunyawī (d. 671/1273) and learned sharī'at and mysticism from him, and was then appointed to the judgeship of Sīwās and of Malāṭiya under Aḥmad Takudār (680-683/1281-1284). He wrote more than twelve books in the different branches of knowledge, mostly medical and philosophy. His notable Persian book is the Durrat al-Tāj li Ghurrat al-Dubbāj which includes 12 branches of knowledge,

and is dedicated to Amīr Dubāj (d. 706/1306), the Ishāqwandī ruler of Gilan.

It is recorded that in his later years of life, Quṭb al-Dīn retired to Tabrīz, and towards the end of his life he ardently studied hadīth and made some critical notes on the subject, and perhaps because of this wide-ranging studies Abu 'l-Fidā' gave him the title al-mutafarrīn (experienced in many fields).

Concerning his humour and libertinism, it should be noticed that unlike 'Aḍud al-Dīn, Quṭb al-Dīn has been recorded as perhaps the most humorous of all Persian scholars. He always tried to preserve his independence, and in spite of his prestige with princes and courtiers he lived at a distance from the court. In this respect he led the life of a mystic, and it is said that he sometimes neglected his religious duties, although al-Suyūṭī disputes this idea. He, however, loved wine and sat among the scorners. He was a brilliant chess player and played continuously. He was a Shāfi'ite, and Shāfi'ī himself permitted playing chess and was himself fond of it; he was also a very skilled conjurer and played the rubāb. There are still many amusing anecdotes in circulation about him among the educated people in Persia. For instance, it is said that he had continuous disputes with Khwaja Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍlallāh Hamadānī (645-718/1247-1318), who was libelled as being a Jew. He wrote a commentary on the Koran, and when Quṭb al-Dīn heard this, he said, "If Rashīd al-Dīn produces a tafsīr on the Koran, then I shall write a work of exegesis on the Torah."

'Ubaid seems to have put his own ideas into the mouth of Quṭb al-Dīn, and his name occurs 10 times in the Joyous Treatise, and each presents one of 'Ubaid's own criticism on social and ethical disorderliness of the society. Throughout this thesis some examples

of his humour have been given. The following is another example of them:

Quṭb al-Dīn was a very witty man. He used to pretend conversion to Christianity or Judaism in the Christian and Jewish societies, and to Islam in the Islamic community, pretending that he was of another faith. It happened that on one of these occasions Shaikh Sa'dī saw him, tricking the people into supposing that he would convert to their faith, and they responded by providing rewards and robes. Sa'dī watching the scene was surprised and approaching him whispered in his ear, "Oh Quṭb al-Dīn, you have never been a Muslim!"

Bibliography: Abū 'l-Fidā', Tārīkh (vol. IV, pp. 65-6); Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, al-Hawādiṭh al-Jāmi'a (p. 358); Khwāndmīr, Ḥabīb al-Siyar (vol. III, p. 76); Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Tehrānī, Gāhnāma-i 1311 (pp. 137-8); Khwānsārī, Rawḍāt al-Jannāt (p. 508); Mishkāṭ, Muḥammad, Muqaddama-i Durrat al-Tāj; Iqbāl, Tārīkh-i Mogol (pp. 506-7).

CHAPTER III

1. Khwāja Nizām al-Dīn ‘Ubaidallāh-i Zākānī of Qazwīn is a remarkable figure of the eighth/seventeenth century, a writer, poet and philosophical humorist; he is perhaps the greatest parodist and satirical writer ever produced by Persia. We have but little sure information of his career, and few of his biographers could refrain from the surrounding the bare details with imaginative anecdotes. All we know is limited to just one invaluable source whose writer was a contemporary of ‘Ubaid. This is the Tārīkh-i Guzīda which was composed by the celebrated Ḥamdallāh Mustawfī of Qazwīn (d. 750/1349), our poet's compatriot who finished his work in 730/1330.¹ He speaks of Zākānīs as notable tribes of the Banu Khafāja and quotes an Arabic rescript (manshūr) addressed to them by the Prophet Muḥammad.²

At the end of his article on Qazwīn, the author mentions our poet as follows: "Among them, that is to say, the Zākānīs, is that honoured Khwaja Nizām al-Dīn ‘Ubaidallāh, who has some fine poems and unrivalled treatises."³ This scant, but important, information throws light on

1. See Tārīkh-i Guzīda, p. 7:

«این کتاب راگزیده نام کرده مبنی گردانید بر ذکر انبیاء و اولیاء و مبادی هات و وزیران و ایران زمین و آثار و اشیائی که بازمانده از عهد آدم... تا زمان تألیف این مختصر که سنه ثلثین و سبعمائة (۷۳۰) مصطفوی است»

2. Ibid., p. 804:

«زاگانان - اصلشان از عرب بنی مخضاجه است. مشهوری است از رسول خدا صلی الله علیه و آله که فرمود: «یا ایها الذین آمنوا اذکروا نعم الله الیه الی بنی زاکان بعد ما اسلموا...»

Banū Khafāja, a subdivision of the Hawāzin tribe of ‘Uqail which remained as powerful Bedowins longer than most of the other tribes which inhabited the Arabian Peninsula at the dawn of Islam. For more details, see Nuwairī, Nihāyat al-‘Arab, vol. II, pp. 340-42.

3. Tārīkh-i Guzīda, p. 805:

«و از ایشان صاحب معظم مواجد نظام الدین عبید الله الشافعی بود و در ثلثین و سبعمائة»

some aspects of our poet's life. First, it explains that 'Ubaid was named Zākānī because of his membership of the Zākānī family who were a branch of the Banū Khafāja Arabs, who after having travelled to Iran, had settled outside Qazwīn. It is perhaps for this reason that 'Ubaid's fellow poet Salmān-i Sāwajī (d. 778/1376) called him "rustic-born" (rūstā-zāda):

'Ubaid-i Zākānī, that infernal satirist
Is destined to be ill-fated and bereft of religion
Though he is not from Qazwīn, and is rustic-born
It may be appropriate to call him a Qazwīnī. 1

The second fact that we can derive from Mustawfī's information is our poet's full name, his family and descent. In accordance with the above information, his name was 'Ubaidallāh, and this is quite correct, because 'Ubaid himself gives his name when addressing his beloved:

If you do injustice to others and oppression
Do not do the same to 'Ubaidallāh Zākānī. 2

In the meantime, it is clear that when Mustawfī's book was written in 730/1329, 'Ubaid was already a man of note in his homeland, Qazwīn, and this suggests that he could not have been born much later than 700/1300.

As far as secondary sources are concerned, we have the Tadhkira of Dawlatshāh of Samarqand who composed his book in 829/1486.³ He devotes

1. Dawlatshāh, Tadhkira, p. 324:

خجندی و هجاگو عبید زاکانی
مقرر است به بددلی و بددینی
اگر چه نیت ز قزوین و روستا زاده
ولیک می شود اندر حدیث قزوینی

Qazwīnīs are regarded as stupid by the inhabitants of other towns.

2. Kulliyāt, p. 71:

گر گنی با دیگران جور و جفا
با عبید اللہ زاکانی مکن

3. First edited by E.G. Browne (Leiden, 1901). A new edition appeared with additions and corrections in 1958 (Tehrān) by Muḥammad 'Abbāsī. Dawlatshāh quotes only two poems of 'Ubaid, one of them is on "debt", which is famous and exists in his diwān (pp. 71-2), the second is not extant in his own diwān; it seems, however, that it is not 'Ubaid's, because both the style and significance are not apt to his poetry. See Tadhkira, p. 326.

a long but less informative fasl on 'Ubaid which with fuller quotations from his poems is reproduced in the Haft Iqlīm by Amīn Ahmad Rāzī (d. ca. 1023/1617). The information offered in Ḥabīb al-Siyar by Ghiyāth al-Dīn Khwāndmīr (d. 942/1535) and Ātashkada by Luṭf 'Alī Ādhar (d. 1195/1700) are both very meagre, and no mention of him is made in Majma' al-Fuṣahā' by Hidāyat (d. 1288/1871), perhaps because the author was reluctant to mention a satirist's name in his book.

From the information that Dawlatshāh gives us, it is worth noting that he says,

At the beginning 'Ubaid was not a ribald satirist. He composed a treatise on rhetoric which he desired to present to the king. The courtiers and favourites, however, told him that the king had no need of such rubbish. Then he composed a fine panegyric, which he desired to recite, but they informed him that his majesty did not like to be mocked with lies, exaggerations and the fulsome flattery of poets. Thereupon, 'Ubaid said, "In that case I too will pursue the path of impudence, so that by this means I may obtain access to the king's most intimate society, and may become one of his courtiers and favourites", which he accordingly did. He then began recklessly to utter the most shameless sayings, and versified this elegant quatrain:

In arts and learning be not skilled like me,
Or by the great — like me despised thou 'lt be.
Wouldst earn applause from this base age of thine
[Take boys to the courts] Beg shamelessly, play lute and
libertine. 1

Although the description of Dawlatshāh is no doubt accurate, this anecdote, concerning the reason for 'Ubaid's flight to satire, does not

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1. Dawlatshāh, Tadhkirā, p. 322. See also Browne, A Literary History of Persia, vol. III, pp. 232-3, which I have reproduced his translation. The quatrain is as follows:

تا نزد عزیزان نشی خوار بوم	در علم و هنر مشو بوم صاحب فن
گنگ آدر و گنگری کن و گنگر زن	نواهی که نثوی پسند ارباب زمن

This quatrain is not extant in 'Ubaid's Kulliyāt, published or manuscript.

have the ring of truth. 'Ubaid's preoccupation with witticism and mockery and the like, was probably because of his own natural temperament, although the corruption of the age must have been a great motive. Of the two poems which Dawlatshāh has recorded¹, and we have quoted the first one, neither is 'Ubaid's; the first one is not in 'Ubaid's Kulliyāt and the second was composed by Anwarī, who died nearly two centuries before 'Ubaid.²

We know nothing of 'Ubaid's childhood and youth, and there is little of value about this period in his complete writings, and what we are told by Mustawfī is hardly applicable to his childhood and youth. Again the veracity of what has been said in different sources about 'Ubaid's honours and titles such as Sāhib-i Mu'azzam (the honoured minister) and Khawāja (a man of distinction)³, and Mafkhar al-Fudalā' (the pride of the learned men)⁴ are not known. These titles, in particular the two first, were applied to people who held some ministerial position, or to those who were of the same rank⁵; but we have no evidence of 'Ubaid's having been a minister to any of his contemporary kings, and it seems clear that he never officially held such a position. However, we do know that he was almost certainly honoured at least in some courts. Besides these biographers mentioned above, he himself in one of his poems in praise of the Muzaffarid Shāh Shujā' writes:

1. Tadhkirā, p. 323. The second quatrain is as follows:

ای سواجہ مکن تا بتوانی طلب علم کا نذر طلب رایت هر روزہ بانی
رد مسخر گے پیشہ کن و منظر بی آ نور تا داد بخود از دست و کتر بستانی

2. Anwarī, Diwān, vol. II, p. 581 (ed. Radawī).

3. Tārīkh-i Guzida, p. 85.

4. Tadhkirā, p. 322.

5. Like Sāhib b. 'Abbād and Khwāja Rashīd al-Dīn and a few others.

Kings [and nobles] have ever honoured me
 From the beginning of my childhood up to this time;
 Now from Your Majesty I expect the same courtesy
 Which I have seen from the world's nobles and kings. 1

This ode was written during the two years 766-767/1364-1365, when Shāh Shujā' was residing in the city of Kīmān. Hence it would seem that from his childhood until the time in which he praised Shāh Shujā', only a few years before his death according to his biographers, 'Ubaid lived among his family, which was a noble one. He also lived in the courts of the kings, but it is clear that the titles he acquired were given to him not because he held an official position like a judgeship², rather as an honorific title, indicating social rank. For information which would complement the scant details offered by Mustawfī, we are forced to look to his own writings. Here, too, our hope is frustrated, for although our writer is hardly an unworldly mystic, it seems he had little regard for committing himself to posterity. He is best characterized as a libertine who always avoided speaking about himself either directly or indirectly. What we may infer from his own writings is that 'Ubaid's early life and studies were not in Shirāz as Dawlatshāh writes³, on the contrary at a date approximately between 742-758/1341-1356 at the

1. Kulliyāt, p. 33:

مراهمی سلاطین عزیز داشته اند
 ز ابداي صبا تا به این زمان داوان
 ز حضرت کوهین چشم تربیت دارم
 که دیده ام ز بزرگان خوشروان جهان

2. In a selection of 'Ubaid's latā'if, to which is prefixed a Persian preface, probably by Mīrzā Ḥabīb of Iṣfahān (d. 1311/1893), printed at Istanbul in 1303/1885-6, after quoting Dawlatshāh, suggests that 'Ubaid returned to Qazwīn, and there he had the honour of being appointed to a judgeship (qadāwāt).

3. Tadhkira, p. 322: « [عبید] در روزگار شاه ابوسحاق در شیراز بجهت تعلیم مشغول بودی »

beginning of the reign of Shāh Shaikh Abū Ishāq in Fars, he left 'Iraq for Shiraz, and stayed there while his "heart was captivated by the territory of Shiraz", and he felt attracted to "the breeze of the musallā and Rūknābād"¹

The second date is the year 751/1350 in which 'Ubaid composed the mathnawī 'Ushshāq Nāma dedicated to Shāh Abū Ishāq.² 'Ubaid, was therefore occupied, except for three or four years, at the beginning of the reign of the Injū dynasty at the court of Abū Ishāq, whom, together with his learned vizier Rukn al-Dīn 'Amīd al-Mulk, he praised in different poems on various occasions. Later on, he saw the end of "transitory prosperity" of Abū Ishāq at the hand of the Muzaffarid amīr Mubārīz al-Dīn in 758/1356.³ Abū Ishāq was killed and his palace which he had built in 758/1353, only four years before his death, was utterly destroyed. 'Ubaid has composed two panegyrics and two gita's on this, one of which is quoted in the fourth chapter of this thesis.

It is said that while 'Ubaid was living at the court of Abū Ishāq, there was a beautiful and witty poetess named Jahān Khātūn, who belonged to the royal family, and Amīn al-Dīn of Jāhūr⁴, a member of Abū Ishāq's

1. Kulliyāt, pp. 65 and 55:

زمن بریده دهنو کرده با تنعم و تاز ، و
غریب را وطن خویش می برد از یاد

مراد علی گزفتار خط شیراز
نسیم خاک متصلی د آب رکن آباد

2. Kulliyāt, p. 113:

دوم روز از رجب در نون الف ذال [۷۵۱]
به هر کس باز گفتم قصه خویش

به هر طالع و فرخنده تر فال
بنظم آوردیم این درد دل و ریش

3. Hāfiz, Diwān, p. 140:

خوش درخشید دل دولت مستعجل بود

رسمی خاتم فیروزه بو اسحق

4. Jahān Malik Khātun, was the daughter of Jalāl al-Dīn Mas'ūd b. Sharaf al-Dīn Mahmūd Shāh-i Injū. She introduces herself at the beginning of her diwān (of which there is a copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, Supplément 763) as "Jahān bint-i Mas'ūdshāh". See Ṣafā, Tārīkh-i Adabiyvāt dar Iran, vol. III, pp. 1045-1050.

court married her.¹ 'Ubaid apparently had a poetical contest with her and they seemingly were not on good terms with each other. 'Ubaid has described her poems as "womanish" and "insipid". Hearing of this marriage, 'Ubaid composed some very coarse verses satirizing them both. But no trace of this satire which Dawlatshāh quotes, or any poetical quarrel is extant either in 'Ubaid or Jahān Khātūn's Diwāns.

After Abū Ishāq's death, and seeing the chaos which had erupted in Shiraz, 'Ubaid, who was formerly so fond of Shiraz, decided to leave it. Because, as he puts it "Shiraz" no longer "was a residence fit for intellectuals." It was perhaps at this time that he composed one of his most pessimistic and most deeply philosophical lyrics from which the following lines are quoted:

The result of our career is nothing but disaster
And the interest of life is nothing but evil result
I fully admire the accomplished sage who said:
"Shirāz is not residence fit for intellectuals"
Poverty, loneliness and trouble know no bounds
Oh 'Ubaid! I am no longer able to bear such frustration. 2

1. Shaikh Amīn al-Dīn Jahrumī, who stood in high esteem of Shāh Abū Ishāq, was a jester of his, not a minister as Dawlatshāh puts it. 'Ubaid mentions his name once in Risāla-i Dilgushā (pp. 129), quoting him only as a jester. Some scholars have said Hāfiẓ praised him (Diwān, p. 363), but it seems that the person whom Hāfiẓ admired was Shaikh Amīn al-Dīn of Kāzrūn (d. 745/1344), not Amīn al-Dīn of Jahrum, because the immortal poet describes him as a great mystic, not as a jester:

دگر بقیه آبدان شیخ امین الدین که بمن همتِ او کارهای بسته گشت

See also Zarkūb-i Shirazī, Shiraz Nāma (Tehran, 1942), pp. 173-6; Hidāyat, Riyād al-ʿArifīn (Tehran, 1938), pp. 104-5.

2. Kulliyāt, p. 53:

حاصل ز زندگانی ما جز وبال نیست دزد روزگار بهره بغیر از مال نیست
جانم فدای خاطر صاحب دل که گفت شیراز جای مردم صاحب کمال نیست
درویشی و غریبی و زحمات و زحمت گذشت زین پیش ای عبید مرا احتمال نیست

At any rate, after the conquest of Fars by the Muzaffarids, 'Ubaid did not wish to remain in the service of a bloodthirsty, hypocritical and ill-tempered ruler, whom he could not bring himself to praise. Therefore, in the search for a patron, he composed some fine odes and a tarkīb-band in praise of the Jalayerid Sultān Mu'izz al-Dīn¹ (757-776/1356-1364), better known as Shaikh Uwais and sent them to him, and perhaps later on he went and lived for a while in his court in Baghdād. If he indeed made this journey, it must have been there that he met Salmān-i-Sāwajī. This visit, however, was not friendly, for Salmān had already satirized 'Ubaid, and this time the latter satirized the former. But, as none of these two poets' satires is recorded in their own diwāns, and furthermore no other biographer has reported this unfriendly meeting, which was to end in a lasting friendship, one suspects that Dawlatshāh has fabricated it, as he has done in many other cases.² For, although 'Ubaid had an able pen and a sharp tongue in satire, even against a powerful poet like Salmān, he never criticized anybody personally, and his mind was so open that his social criticism or satire did not take the form of personal motive or grudge, and throughout his writings, one cannot find a single personal attack. In this regard, he is probably equal to Ḥāfiẓ only. They both were social critics with the possible difference that Ḥāfiẓ "tried to get away from that unpleasant, or more accurately, impossible social atmosphere and to take refuge in an imaginary pleasure-dome. 'Ubaid,

1. Ibid., pp. 40-41:

ساقی بیار باره و پر کن بیاد عید... در ده که هم بیارده توان داد داد عید...
سلطان ادیس شاه جهاندار کامکار... نورشید عدل گستر و جمشید روزگار

2. Tadhkira, p. 324.

on the other hand, threw himself into the fight against the degeneracy of the times, and his weapon was none other than satire."¹

* * * * *

History tells us that Mubārīz al-Dīn soon after defeating Abū Ishāq, himself was unluckily blinded and deposed by his own sons Shāh Shujā' and Shāh Maḥmūd.² Shāh Shujā' was also in conflict with his brother Maḥmūd over Shiraz. During this time 'Ubaid had abandoned the court of Baghdād, perhaps because of Salmān's domination there, or the news of Mubārīz al-Dīn's decline, and was seeking a refuge. He went to Kirmān and there composed a fine panegyric in praise of "the conqueror of Kirmān", Shāh Shujā'. And when the king, after arranging the state affairs of Kirman, came back to Shirāz, our poet accompanied him, and stayed there most probably until his death (771/1369), for, unlike his father, Shāh Shujā' was a poet-king and an open-minded supporter of men of letters. In fact, the last and only date we can derive from his poems concerning his connection with this king is the year 768/1364, in which he praised Shāh Shujā' for the conquest of Isfahān.³

2. Turning now to 'Ubaid's merits and qualifications, it seems necessary to go back again to his contemporary compatriot Mustawfī. According to him 'Ubaid was a member of a family of lords and ministers

1. M. Farzād, Rats against Cats, p. 11.

2. Kutbī, Tārīkh-i Āl-i Muẓaffar, p. 63:

» در شب امیر مبارز الدین را بقلعه طبرک بردند، همان شب چشم جهان بین را در به تکمیل میل مگوشد »

For details, see pp. 153-4 of this chapter.

3. Kulliyāt, pp. 32-35.

(arbāb wa sudūr). "The second branch of the Zākānīs," he writes, "were lords and ministers. Of them the honoured minister (ṣāhib-i sa'īd) Ṣafiyy al-Dīn Zākānī was the owner of territories and means. His descendants are today amongst the noble lords of Qazwīn, and from them is the honoured master Khwāja Nizām al-Dīn 'Ubaidallāh, who has some fine poems and unrivalled writings."¹

Now according to what Mustawfī said, because he was from a noble and perhaps ministerial family, we can imagine that 'Ubaid from his childhood was educated in a manner appropriate to this rank, that is to say, he learned literature and practiced the art of calligraphy, and acquired a good general knowledge of Islamic culture and Persian poetry and civilization, mingling them all with his talent of genuine satirical poetry and excellent parody. Incidentally, 'Ubaid himself speaks of his youth by saying that, "From the beginning of his youth he attempted to study the books and sayings of the men of letters and sages; and he afterwards never stopped studying the early and recent philosophers."² Besides, we know for certain that Mustawfī finished his book *Tārīkh Guzīda* in 730/1330, and as stated above, at this date 'Ubaid was not probably more than thirty years of age; it seems too that he was an inhabitant of Qazwīn at that time, because he was flattered by Mustawfī in the manner of someone present rather than a

1. *Tārīkh-i Guzīda*, p. 805:

« رُشْدِ دوم [از را کانیان] از باب و صدود بودند. از ایشان صاحب سعید صفی الدین زاکانی خدادند املاک و اسباب بود. نوادگان او اکنون از اکابر آرباب قزوین اند؛ و از ایشان صاحب معظم خواجه نظام الدین عبید الله الشارحیوب دارد و در کتاب بی نظیر: »

2. *Kulliyāt*, p. 51:

« متکلم این حروف عبید زاکانی - بَلَّغَهُ اللهُ غَايَةَ أَلَامَانِ - اگر چه در علم و هنر پای بی ندارد اما از ادان جوانی بمطالعه کتب و سخن علما و حکما اهتمام تمام داشت: »

person far away. Therefore, Dawlatshāh's statement that 'Ubaid "in the time of Shāh Abū Ishāq's reign was occupied in obtaining knowledge in Shirāz", undoubtedly is one of his mistakes. For, according to the reasons given earlier, and by virtue of the dates we can derive from his own poems and writings, 'Ubaid left Iraq for Shiraz at the age of more than forty-five. This date coincides with the domination of Shāh Abū Ishāq over Shiraz and the beginning of his reign in Fārs (742-758/1341-1356); it seems unbelievable that a person who had grown up in a ministerial, or even in a well-to-do, house, and was now in attendance on the king, would have remained illiterate and uneducated until that date.

The truth is that for a long time before his departure from Iraq for Fārs, 'Ubaid was famous as a writer and poet, at least in his own birth-place of Qazwīn, because Mustawfī wrote in 730/1329, he "has some fine poems and unrivalled treatises."

At any rate, the reader of 'Ubaid's poetry and unique treatises can discern the extent of his education both in the maturity of his style and the subtlety of meaning. His treatise The Ethics of the Aristocracy, alone, is enough to exhibit his thorough learning and complete mastery of the former scholars of Persian and Arabic literature, and his practice in the sciences of his time, in particular the Koran, tradition, exegesis, jurisprudence and finally philosophy, especially practical morals or khulqīyāt. These qualifications are discernable here and there in his satirical but documented attacks on religious matters and on the mismanagement of the religious authorities. He was interested both in astrology (tanjīm) and astronomy (nujūm), for we have a book on astronomy called al-Ashjār wal-Athmār, the manuscript

from which 'Ubaid copied still being extant in private hands.¹ This volume incidently bears an endorsement in the writing of 'Ubaid's son Ishāq, recording that it had passed into his possession by inheritance in 772/1370-71.²

It is worthwhile mentioning here that we have two dates for 'Ubaid's death, 771/1369-70³ and 772/1370-71).⁴ Now, because the book al-Ashjār wal-Athmār passed into the possession of his son Ishāq in 772/1370-71 as an inheritance, it appears clear that 'Ubaid was not alive at that time and consequently the year 771/1370-71 would seem to be the more probable date of 'Ubaid's death.

'Ubaid's ability is superb in both Persian and Arabic verse and prose. The "verses in Arabic testify to 'Ubaid's thorough education." But his style of Persian is another matter. It is mostly short and laconic. His pen is able and "lays his finger on the characteristic shortcomings of each class with a single appropriate word or in a short phrase."⁵ And as far as freshness and aesthetic qualities are concerned the verse and prose of 'Ubaid have not suffered from the ravages of time indeed. They are extremely valuable poetical documents for obtaining a closer acquaintance with the Iran of that period.

1. The author of this book, 'Alī Shāh b. Muḥammad b. Qāsim al-Khwārazmī, was born in 623/1226, and finished his book in 687/1288. We, however, do not know his date of death. He lived in the service of the house of Juwainī. There is another manuscript of this work in the Kitāb Khāna-i Mellī dated 688/1289 (M. Minovī, "Ijtimā'-i Kawākib dar Sal-i 582/1186", Majalla-i Dānishkada, Tehran, 1955, No. 3, pp. 27-58).
2. It is preserved now in Malik Library, and 'Abbās Iqbāl describes it fully in his introduction to 'Ubaid's Kulliyāt, pp. 5-8. See also Arberry, Classical Persian Literature, pp. 259-260.
3. Suggested by Ṣādiq Isfahānī in Shāhid-i Ṣādiq (Tehran, 1963), p. 149.
4. Kāshī, Taqī al-Dīn, Khulāsat al-Ash'ār (Tehran, 1960), p. 181.
5. J. Rypka, History of Iranian Literature, p. 272.

Unfortunately as Arberry writes, "less attention has been accorded to his lyric poetry which, though small in quantity, is most fascinating and in surprising contrast to the majority of 'Ubaïd's works. These poems are worthy of attention not only on their own account, but also because here "the author obviously bridges the gap between Sa'dî and Hâfiz and introduces some new elements into the ghazal that certainly influenced his younger contemporary, who moved in the same court circle."¹

'Ubaïd's satire and bantering humour — as discussed elsewhere in this thesis — have, too, a mysterious quality of perennial freshness. One may read them again and again, and in each reading something fresh appears: a single word will assume a new significance, a phrase will suddenly take on a more vivid meaning.

3. With the death of Sultan Abū Sa'īd in 732/1335, the Mongolian dynasty in Persia and Western Asia had practically come to an end, and after a few monarchs who were short-lived, the Mongolian power in Persia, may be said to have disappeared completely. A period of anarchy followed, and in the interregnum of half a century until the rise of Timūr, a number of petty dynasties divided the country. The best known of them were the Jalāyerīds in the west, that is Baghdād and its outskirts (736-827/1335-1423), the Chūpānīs in Adharbayjān (718-745/1318-1344); the Ṭughā Timurīds (737-812/1336-1409) in Gurgān; the Sarbedārs (738-788/1337-1386) in Sabzwār and its outskirts; Karts (643-783/1245-1381) in the north-east (Herāt); the Muḏaffarīds (723-795/1323-1392) in Yazd, Isfahān and Shirāz, and finally Injūs (ca. 703-758/1303-1357) in Fars.²

1. Classical Persian Literature, pp. 297-98.

2. Yāsamī, Rashīd, Tārīkh-i Iran, p. 7.

These rulers continuously fought wars against each other, in the fifty years' interregnum between the decline of the Mongol dynasty and the appearance of Tamerlane (736-807/1335-1404). Year by year, the situation in Iran became more desperate as the local governors busied themselves subjugating each other, while the people suffered poverty, homelessness and the other ravages of war. All these events paved the path for Timūr's conquests. We are, however, not concerned with Timūr himself, for 'Ubaid, although contemporary to him, did not see him. Of the various dynasties mentioned above we will discuss only three: the Injūs, Muẓaffarids and Jalāyerids, with whom 'Ubaid was to have some connection. Apart from these three dynasties, 'Ubaid praised two ministers: Khwāja 'Alā' al-Dīn Muḥammad and Rukn al-Dīn 'Amīd al-Mulk. To complete our study of 'Ubaid's career, it is necessary to pause here, and give some information about these dynasties and the two viziers.

A. In the fourth chapter some remarks are given about the Muẓaffarids and the Injūs; and in fact because of the interrelation of the events that occurred between these two houses, their histories are to a great extent inseparable. Here, we supplement what is in the chapter mentioned above.

It is recorded that the ancestors of the Muẓaffarids have come to Persian from Arabia in the early days of the Muslim conquests. They settled first near Khwaf in Khurāsān¹, but Amīr Ghiyāth al-Dīn, the grandfather of Mubārīz al-Dīn migrated to Yazd during the Mongol

1. Kutbī, Tārīkh-i Āl-i Muẓaffar, p. 3:

» ذکر نسب امیر مبارز الدین محمد بن مظفر بن منصور الحاجی - جدّ اعلیٰ ایشان
 امیر غیاث الدین حاجی از خوفِ خراسان بود ... زمانه که لشکر اسلام به تسخیر ولایت
 خراسان آمدند، اجداد او از دیارِ عرب بدان جانب آمدند.

invasion.¹ His third son Jalāl al-Dīn Maṣṣūr, who lived at Maibūd near Yazd, had three sons: Sharaf al-Dīn Muṣṣaffar, Zain al-Dīn ‘Alī and Mubārīz al-Dīn Muḥammad. Sharaf al-Dīn, who served the four Mongol kings Arghun, Gaykhātū, Ghāzān and Uljāitū, died in 713/1313. He had a son and two daughters. His son is Amīr Mubārīz al-Dīn Muḥammad (713-759/1313-1357), who is usually regarded as the founder of the dynasty, and although was only thirteen years of age, succeeded after his father's death, and was confirmed in his father's offices by Uljāitū (d. 716/1316).² This dynasty which remained in power for seventy-two years from Mubārīz al-Dīn's succession in 723/1323 to the decline of the dynasty by Timūr in 795/1393, ruled over Fars, Kirman, Yazd and Iṣfahān.³ Mubārīz al-Dīn's original government, as we have seen, was the little town of Maibūd near Yazd, but in 737/1336 the latter was added to his jurisdiction. In 741/1340 he conquered Kirmān. After waging at least seven wars against Abū Ishāq, he eventually overcame him and succeeded in conquering the province of Fārs with its capital at Shiraz. He killed the latter and his little son ‘Alī Sahl, aged ten, in 758/1356.⁴ As Mubārīz al-Dīn was a fanatical Muslim, he decided to enact severe laws against the pleasure-seekers and the libertines, to the extent that even apart from intellectual poets like Ḥāfiẓ and ‘Ubaid, his own son Shāh Shujā’ was unable to tolerate his restrictions and reacted sharply in the following quatrain:

In our time it is illicit to drink wine
Nor does one dare to play the zither, harp and tambourine

1. E. G. Browne, A Literary History of Persia, vol. III, p. 162.

2. A. Iqbāl, Tārīkh-i Mogol, p. 414.

3. Ibid., p. 442.

4. Kubī, Tārīkh-i Āl-i Muṣṣaffar, pp. 59-63; Browne, vol. III, p. 164.

All libertines gave up the habit of drinking
Except the proctor who is drunk but not with wine. 1

However, as stated already, he was blinded by his two sons, and imprisoned in Bam, and died in 765/1363 when he was sixty-five. There is nothing in praise of this ruler in 'Ubaid's dīwān, but instead, as he was known among the rabble and his hypocritical flatterers as the "warrior king" (shāh-i ghāzī), both 'Ubaid and his celebrated contemporary fellow-poet Ḥāfiẓ criticized him very sharply indeed. 'Ubaid refers to him in his parodical tarjī'-band in which he praises his own genital organ comparing its splendour to Mubārīz al-Dīn's war flag (sunjūq).² The reason for this is that 'Ubaid, Ḥāfiẓ and many other educated people of their rank were the victims of his ruthlessness and hypocrisy. They were so annoyed at his harsh treatment that they were even tempted to renounce their faith. 'Ubaid writes:

Now is the time for us to take action
To declare openly the doctrine of the atheists;
To take residence in the street of the Magi, the fire-worshippers,
And to turn our face towards the Mongols' altar. 3

In short, they were not prepared to tolerate Islam in the form that Mubārīz al-Dīn presented it, by the sword and hypocritical asceticism.

1. Kutbī, p. 42:

نه چنگ نه قانون و نه دین در دست است
بخزینتیب شهر که بهیست است

در مجلس دهر سازستی بخت است
رندان همه ترک می پرستی کردند

2. Kulliyāt, p. 62:

کم ز شوقِ ثَه غازی نیست

که من چون عَلمِ برا فرارزد

See also Chapter I, p. 37.

3. Ibid., p. 61:

رسم الحاد آشکار کنیم
روی در قبه تبار کنیم

وقت آن شد که عزم کار کنیم
خانه در کوچه مُغان بگیریم

Shāh Shujā' (759-786/1357-1384), on the contrary, is praised warmly by both 'Ubaid and Ḥāfiẓ due to his few remarkable characteristics. He was the patron of Ḥāfiẓ, and himself possessed a fairly good poetic talent and wrote poems in Arabic and Persian; some of them are given by Kutbī.¹ He knew the Koran by heart when he was nine years of age.² He was also a fine calligrapher and above all a skilled man of military tactics. He was also a great patron of men of learning and at one time used to attend the lectures of 'Aḡud al-Dīn Ijī (d. 756/1355).³ His military expeditions were also successful, and for a while he became the master of the greater part of Persia. In his family relationships, however, he was not happier than his father, Mubārīz al-Dīn. He was harrassed by disloyalty of one son, Sulṭān Uwais, and the fancied disloyalty of another, Sulṭān Shīblī, whom he ordered to be blinded, while he was heavily drunk, and repented of his severe action when it was too late.⁴

'Ubaid did not praise anyone of this house except Shāh Shujā'. There are four odes in which he gave a good impression of his connection with this king, but one can hardly obtain any historical information from them, either about this king or about 'Ubaid's own career. The only fact which is obtainable from these odes is the conquest of Isfahān, which happened in 768/1366; and it seems probable that 'Ubaid himself was present at the time in Isfahān⁵:

1. Kutbī, pp. 63-4.

2. Ibid., p. 63.

3. Ibid., p. 37.

4. E.G. Browne, vol. III, p. 166.

5. Iqbāl, introduction to 'Ubaid's Kulliyāt, pp. 11-12.

The morning of the feast, the beloved's face and the days
of youth,
The clamour of the harp, the banks of Zāyanda Rūd and the
wine glass;
Good tidings of the conquest of Isfahan,
All are the tokens of high fortune and the hope of
inauguration. 1

B. The second personality whom 'Ubaid praised and whose name occurs in his dīwān is Sultān Mu'izz al-Dīn Uwais-i Ḥasan the Jalāyerid (757-776/1356-1374). The Jalāyerids were an important Mongolian tribe also called the Ilkānī (after their ancestor Ilkānuyān who accompanied Hulagu on his way to Iran).² This dynasty which was founded by Shaikh Hasan-i Buzurg (740-757/1339-1356), lasted for ninety-six years and is regarded by the historians as the most eminent dynasty in the inter-regnum between the decline of the Mongols and the emergence of Timur.³ They reigned from 740 to 836/1339-1432, and were eight in number. The most important figure, however, was the second, that is Sultān Uwais, who succeeded his father Ḥasan-i Buzurg in 757/1356. His importance rests mostly on his cultural achievements and in particular his patronage of four Persian poets; 'Ubaid, Salmān-i Sāwajī, Khwāja Muḥammad-i 'Aṣṣār (d. 784/1382) and Sharaf al-Dīn Rāmī (d. 791/1388), rather than military feats⁴; although in this regard, too, he was successful. After his succession, the first task he set himself was to clear the northern part of his dominion. In 763/1361 he marched to Awjān, and in the autumn of this year he besieged Tabriz and overcame

1. Kulliyāt, pp. 3-4:

صباح عید و رخ یار و روزگارِ شباب خروش بچکِ دل و زنده رود و جامِ شرب
نورِ فتحِ صفا هان و مژده اقبال ناله بختِ بلند و امیدِ فتحِ الباب

2. Iqbāl, Tārīkh-i Mogol, p. 455.

3. Ibid., p. 55.

4. Van Loon, Tārīkh-i Shaikh Uwais, pp. 8-10.

Akhī Jūq and caused him to flee.¹ In 766/1364, he was informed that Khwāja Marjān, the governor of Baghdād, had rebelled. He promptly went there and took the town, and although he forgave the rebel because of the nobles' mediation, he however entrusted the town to Sulaimān-i Khāzin.² In 768/1366 he marched to Diyār Bakr, Muṣīl and Mārdīn. In this area he was faced with a stubborn enemy called Bairām Khwāja (the chief of Qara-Quyūnlū), who still refused the authority of the Jalāyerids. Uwais defeated him and plundered his possessions.³ In 772/1370 he defeated Amīr Walī in Rayy. The latter, however, recaptured Rayy and annexed Sāwa and Gurgān to his dominion. Uwais decided to eradicate him and left Tabrīz for ^{suburb} Rab'ī Rashīdī, but fell sick and died in 776/1374.⁴

Uwais was a just and art-loving king. He loved poetry and protected poets. One of them, as mentioned earlier, was Salmān of Sāwa, who wrote a number of excellent panegyrics on his exploits.⁵ Sharaf al-Dīn Rāmī dedicated his Anīs al-'Ushshāq to him.⁶ He himself composed verses and was a good calligrapher and painter. He also tried to revive and promote trade with the Venetians, although he failed in his attempts.⁷ He was also fond of erecting grand buildings and built numerous buildings in Tabrīz, among them a building called Dawlat-Khāna, which was claimed by a European traveller contemporary to Uwais to have consisted of 20,000 rooms and lodgings.⁸

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1. Browne, vol. III, p. 172; Mīrkhwānd, Rawzat al-Safā', vol. IV, pp. 211-212.
 2. Kh. Bayānī, Dhail-i Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh, ta'līf-i Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, part 1, p. 131.
 3. Van Loon, Tārīkh-i Shaikh Uwais, pp. 12-13.
 4. Iqbāl, Tārīkh-i Mogol, pp. 458-59.
 5. There are some sixty-three panegyrics in his Diwān concerning Shaikh Uwais and the other members of this dynasty, twenty-one of them on Uwais only.
 6. Van Loon, Tārīkh-i Shaikh Uwais, p. 13.
 7. Iqbāl, Tārīkh-i Mogol, p. 459.
 8. Ibid., p. 459; Van Loon, p. 13.

These are all historical facts which come down from other sources rather than 'Ubaid's writings, for 'Ubaid gives no information about his connection with Uwais. He has praised Uwais in five odes. It is understood from the existing sources, and from 'Ubaid's four odes and a single tarkīb-band¹ that Uwais never came to Shiraz, and as stated in 'Ubaid's career, it seems very probable that the poet, after the death of his favourite king Abū Ishāq in 758/1356, travelled to Baghdād and for a while stayed in Uwais' court, and it is probable too that on this trip he also met Salmān.²

C. The third and at the same time the most favourite character whom 'Ubaid praised is the Inju'id Shāh Shaikh Abū Ishāq. Properly speaking, the Turkish term "Indjū" applied to royal estates under the Mongols³, but it is usually given to the dynasty which reigned ca. 703-758/1304-1356 in Fars and its environs. The founder of the dynasty, Sharaf al-Dīn Mahmūdshāh, was sent there by Uljāitū (d. 716/1316) to administer the royal estates. According to Mustawfī, he was a descendant of 'Abdallāh-i Anṣārī (396-481/1005-1088), the famous Persian mystic.⁴ Under Uljāitū's successor, Abū Sa'īd, he remained in office, and even extended his power so that by ca. 725/1325 he was practically the independent ruler of Shiraz and almost the whole of Fars. After the

1. Kulliyāt, pp. 5, 13, 20, 23 and 40.

2. See Iqbāl's introduction to 'Ubaid's Kulliyāt, pp. 11-12, and also Dawlatshāh, Tadhkira, p. 324.

3. Encyclopaedia of Islam, under Indjū.

4. Tārīkh-i Guzida, pp. 663-4:

« شیخ عبد اللہ انصاری ... معروف بہ پیر ہری [ہرات] معاصر شیخ ابوسعید لوی الخیر دالہ حسن
خرقانی بود . ملک شرف الدین محمود شاہ اینجو کہ سالہا حکومت بر دو بحر فارس و کرمان و شبانکارہ
و یزد و بعضی عراق کرد ، و بزرگ ترین اعظم ایران شد از نسل اوست و نسبتش برین موجب
محمود شاہ بن فضل اللہ الملقب بہ آق خواجہ یکان ساکناً بقریہ سوهقان من ضیاع قزوین و قزوین
عبد اللہ بن سعد بن نصر بن محمد بن عبد اللہ الانصاری . »

death of Abū Sa'īd, however, he was executed by the order of his successor Arpā Kā'ūn in 736/1336.¹ Sharaf al-Dīn had four sons, the fourth being Abū Ishāq, who was the patron of our poet. As stated earlier in this chapter, after coming to power in Shiraz, he made attempts to extend his rule over Yazd and Kirman, but he came into conflict with Mubārīz al-Dīn with varying successes, but at the end was besieged in Shiraz itself, which surrendered to the Muzaffarids in 754/1333.² Before the surrender, he had escaped to Qal'a Safīd and receiving some support from Amīr Ḥasan Buzurg Ilkānī, made his way to Isfahān, wherein he was taken prisoner and we are told that he was handed over for execution to the relatives of a man who had been put to death on his orders. This was in 758/1357.³

His death, and accordingly the death or disgrace of his family and his entourage, caused deep sorrow among the great poets, writers and the men of learning. From them Ḥāfiẓ and 'Ubaid in particular were very much annoyed. For above all, he himself was a poet and a friend of poets and intellectuals. Concerning Abū Ishāq's brief but genial reign at Shiraz Ḥāfiẓ wrote:

In truth the turquoise ring of Abū Ishāq
Flashed finely but alas it was transitory. 4

However, the most striking poems on this event were composed by 'Ubaid. There are some twenty-two panegyrics or fragments in his diwān concerning

1. Mirkhwānd, Rawdat al-Safā', vol. IV, p. 178.

2. Browne, vol. III, p. 164.

3. Kutbī, Tārīkh-i Āl-i Muzaffar, p. 54.

4. Ḥāfiẓ, Diwān, p. 140:

رهتی خاتم فیروزه بود ای حقیقی خوش درخشید دولت مستعجل بود

Abū Ishāq's characteristics, generosity, strength, merits and finally his death. The following lines are examples of them:

By the auspicious justice of that king who is so generous to
his servants,
The region of Shiraz has become an earthly paradise;
Shaikh Abū Ishāq, the world-conqueror of youthful fortune,
Well-distinguished better than the whole world's kings. 1

In this panegyric, 'Ubaid refers to his being self-exiled and the king's hospitality towards strangers.² In all these panegyrics, 'Ubaid has extolled Abū Ishāq to an extent that reminds us of Anwarī and his somewhat irrational exaggerations. In an ode, for instance, in which he describes the beauty of Shiraz, he overrates Abū Ishāq's virtues, calling him "greater than the whole world and no less than anybody save God the Creator."³

One, therefore, would be able to conclude, beyond the poetical exaggerations which have been a common habit amongst his predecessors too, his true loyalty and genuine sympathy towards Abū Ishāq.

D. The fourth personage whom 'Ubaid praises is Khwāja 'Alā' al-Dīn wal-Ḥaqq Muḥammad. 'Ubaid refers to him by name only once in his poems, and once again in an anecdote in the Risāla-i Dilgūshā, this

1. Kulliyāt, p. 25:

ببین معدلت پادشاه بنده نواز ——— بهشت روی زمین است خطه شیراز
جوانگای جوان بخت شیخ ابوسحق ——— زهی ز خجده شاهان خسروان ممتاز

2. Ibid., p. 25:

مرا به حضرت اعلی همین رسید بس است که من غریبم و شاه جهان غریب نواز

3. Ibid., p. 25:

همشید عهد خسرو گیتی جمال دین ——— آن پیش ز آفرینش دکم ز آفریدگار

This last hemistich has been borrowed from Anwarī in the praise of his patron Sultān Sanjar. See Dīwān, vol. I, p. 133 (ed. M. Radawī).

time, however, satirizing him.¹ Again at the beginning of his serious treatise Nawādīr al-Amthāl in Arabic, 'Ubaid names him with an exaggerated manner calling him, "the lord, noble, the more righteous, greater, the master of the men of sword and letters, the king of the ministers in the world 'Alā' al-Dīn wal-Ḥaqq Muḥammad ..."² In Risāla-i Dilgusha he writes: "Once there was a ruler in Mazandarān whose name was 'Alā'. He was a very ruthless governor. A year of drought occurred. People went out to a public prayer for rain. After finishing the prayer, the imām in his pulpit raised his hands in prayer and said, 'Oh God! relieve us of disaster, cholera and 'Alā'.'³

As there is no record of 'Alā' al-Dīn's reign in Mazandarān, it seems that if 'Ubaid meant simply 'Alā' al-Dīn by 'Alā', the writer has changed the name of Khurāsān to Mazandarān, presumeably to prevent any confrontation with his patron.⁴ At any rate, what appears from the historical documents enables us to suggest that this 'Alā' al-Dīn must be no one else but 'Alā' al-Dīn Muḥammad Mustawfī, the son of the Khwāja 'Imād al-Dīn Faryumadī Khurāsānī, who was, at the beginning, one of the proficient state accountants of Khwāja Rashīd al-Dīn Fadlallāh

1. See Iqbāl, introduction to 'Ubaid's Kulliyāt, p. 6.

2. Ms., British Museum, f. 64; Iqbāl's introduction, p. 6:

« المخدم صاحب القرآن الاعلى الاعظم مستخدم ارباب السيف والقلم ملك الوزراء في العالم
علاء الحق والدين محمد ... »

3. Kulliyāt, p. 115:

« در مازندران، علاء نام صاکی بود سخت ظالم. خشک سالی روی نمود، مردم به دست قضا و برین رفتند. چون از نیاز ناخشنود شدند امام بر منبر دست بدعا برداشته گفت: اللهم ارفع عنا البلاء والوباء والعلاء »

4. This inference made by 'Abbās Iqbāl (introduction to 'Ubaid's Kulliyāt) should not be accepted without reservation. Although he does not quote the anecdote in question, as there is no other anecdote in the Risāla-i Dilgūshā in which the word 'Alā' has been used save that one quoted above, it would appear that 'Ubaid has used al-'Alā' simply to provide a rhyme for al-balā' and al-wabā'.

Hamadānī (d. 718/1318). When Sultān Abū Sa'id appointed Rashīd al-Dīn's son Khwāja Ghiyāth al-Dīn as his premier in 727/1327, he made this 'Alā' al-Dīn his partner in the premiership; but six months later he sent him to Khurāsān as the "minister of Khurasān", and gave to Ghiyāth al-Dīn a free hand as his own premier. 'Alā' al-Dīn remained in power in Khurāsān until the year 737/1336, and at that date his authority was ended in Khurasan by the Sarbedaran house of Sabzwār.¹

It is not clear, however, when 'Ubaid met 'Alā al-Dīn and dedicated his book Nawādīr al-Amthāl to him; but it seems probable that he did so in the short period in which 'Alā' al-Dīn shared in the premiership with Ghiyāth al-Dīn about the year 727/1327, because afterwards 'Alā' al-Dīn lived in Khurasān, and it seems unlikely that 'Ubaid travelled to Khurāsān.

Apart from this scattered information about 'Ubaid's connection with 'Alā' al-Dīn, we come across his name in one of 'Ubaid's brilliant poems in which he cries out at a "disastrous debt", and at the end of which he quotes his patron's name clearly, appealing to him to deliver him from the disaster:

Others rejoice in merriment, while I am afflicted with debt,
Everyone has his affairs and business, while I am in the
misfortune of debt.

My duty towards God and my debts to His creatures bow my neck
Shall I discharge my duty towards God, or my debts? ...

If the khwāja does not bespeak for me the king's favour,
How can poor 'Ubaid finally discharge his debts:

Khwaja 'Alā'-i Dawlat u Dīn, except for whose hand
None other in the world has given debt its deserts! 2

1. Mirkhwānd, Rawdat al-Safā', vol. IV, pp. 18; Iqbāl, introduction to 'Ubaid's Kulliyāt, pp. 6-7.

2. Kulliyāt, p. 80:

مردم به عیش خوشدل دین مبتلای قرض هر کس بکار داری و من در بای قرض
قرض خدا و قرض خدایق بگردنم آیا ادای قرض کنم یا ادای قرض
گرخواهم بربیت ننگد پیش پادشاه مسکن عبید چون کند آخر ادای قرض
خواهم علاء دولت و دین آنگه جز کفش هرگز کسی نداد بگیتی سزای قرض

This poem leaves no doubt that 'Alā' al-Dīn was one of 'Ubaid's patrons. Again, we do not know the king whose sympathy 'Ubaid desired through Khwāja 'Alā' al-Dīn. He may have been Abū Sa'īd, who died in 736/1335.

E. The fifth and the last person whose praise has been sung in 'Ubaid's diwān, is Khwāja Rukn al-Dīn 'Amīd al-Mulk, who was Abū Ishāq's vizier; and unlike the former vizier, our knowledge about him is fairly plentiful. This Rukn al-Dīn was the son of another nobleman in the court of Abū Ishāq, whose name is Qāḍī Shams al-Dīn Maḥmūd Ṣā'in (d. 746/1345).¹ When Abū Ishāq dominated most parts of Fars, he appointed Shams al-Dīn Maḥmūd together with Sayyid Ghiyāth al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī as his premiers. These two, however, were struggling for power with each other. Qāḍī Shams al-Dīn, thus, feeling himself inferior to Ghiyāth al-Dīn left Shiraz for Hormīz in the Persian Gulf on the pretext of collecting the taxes.² There he made many attempts at the instigation of his son, that is, Rukn al-Dīn who was living in Shirāz to conquer Kirmān from Mubārīz al-Dīn, but he failed and was captured, and the Mubārīzīd ruler put him to death in 746/1345.³

1. Kutbī, Tārīkh-i Āl-i Muẓaffar, pp. 25-26.

2. Ibid., p. 23:

«مولانا شمس الدین صواب در آن دید که بجانب هرموز دستخراچ اموال آن ولایات روانه گرد...»

3. Khwāfī, Mujmal, p. 231:

«سال ۷۴۶ - حرب شهریار اعظم امیر مبارز الدین محمد مظفر با مولانا شمس الدین صابن قاضی دگر یختن دگشته شدن مولانا شمس الدین مذکور...»

See also Khwāju's Diwān, p. 197, wherein the poet gives the death date of Shams al-Dīn with his full name:

سال هجرت هفتصد و چهل بود و شش کز دَوَرِ حرج
شمس دین محمود صابن آن کز کبریا
نیم روز چارشنبه چارم ماه صفر
بود در اوج معالی آفتاب سیه دور
را نذر خشن باد پای از مرکز خاک بود
و آمدش دور حیات از گردش گیتی

The beginning of Rukn al-Dīn's vizierate, however, is unknown; but it appears that it was immediately after his father's death, therefore he should have gained his position in 747/1346. It was perhaps at that time that 'Ubaid in a fervent ode congratulated him on his succession. Although the poem starts with the king, its end indicates the vizier's glorious accession:

By the favour of God, the Creator, the kingdom of Fārs
Has become pleasanter than the courts of Paradise and gayer
than the spring ...
Because by the favour of the crown-giver Sultān, the enemy-
hunter, world-conqueror, successful ruler,
'Amīd-i Mulk has been bestowed the premiership,
The man whose ancestors were kings and princes for a thousand
generations. 1

There are nine panegyrics altogether in 'Ubaid's dīwān concerning this man.² He himself was an educated man and a fairly good poet. Two of his poems have come down to us.³ 'Ubaid's exaggerated admiration of this minister knew no limits. He calls the "moon" his "servant" and the "sun" his "slave". His "generosity" is "grander than that of Darius". The poet swears by God that "there is no peer or equal in the whole world who could venture to match his splendour". Only he

1. Kulliyāt, p. 25:

خوشتر ز صحن حنبت و خرم تر از بهار شاه عدو شکار چه بگریه و گریه آن تا هزار جده پدرت و شهریار	شد ملک پارس باز به تأیید کردگار کز یه عنایت سلطان تاج بخش تشریف یافت صدر وزارت عمید ملک
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2. Ibid., pp. 18, 25, 29, 30, 34, 37-8, 39, 77, 78.

3. This comes from a MS in the municipality of Isfahān which was written in 782/1380, in which the author of the MS mentions 'Amīd al-Mulk's name fully, giving two of his poems. The following is one of them:

سرمست می نمائنه دوست در خاک شرا بنانه دوست	ترس بجای که هر که در شهر خالصیت آب زندگانی
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See Q. Ghani, Bahth dar Āthār wa Afkār wa Ahwāl-i Hāfiz, pp. 89-90.

deserves to be called the master, for, because of his generosity everybody enjoys a cheerful life.¹ 'Ubaïd lived at least ten or twelve years in his court along with Abū Ishāq's.² This is the information that was obtainable from the poet's own writings concerning his life. There are also some scattered data which the reader would be able to get here and there in the course of this thesis in the diverse chapters.

1. Kulliyāt, pp. 18-19:

که دل و مرتبه صائم و دارا دارد
بندایی که نه انبار و نه همیا دارد
که ز جودت هم کس عیش و نشاط دارد

رکن دین خواجه مہ چاکر خورشید غلام
در جهان همسر و همناش نبوده است و نه هست
راستی خواجه در این عهد تراشاید گفت

2. Kulliyāt, p. 77; p. 30:

تویی که چرخ بیاہ تو الہا دارد
کہ بندہ نام دعاگوئی شما دارد

خدا الہا جان رکن دین عمید الملک
جهان پناہا رہ سال بیش می گذرد

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وزیر شاہ جهان خواجه سہر غلام
یکی بسع رضا بشنوائی ملاذ انام
کشیدہ اختر معدم بدر گہ تو زمام...

جهان فضل دگر م رکن دین عمید الملک
جهان پناہا احوال خویش خواہم گفت
کنون دوازده سالست تاز ملک عرق

CHAPTER IV

'UBAID'S WRITINGS

Before going any further it must be stated that 'Ubaid's writings can be classified in two categories: the serious or literary, and playful or witty. This present thesis is not concerned with his serious writings, except to give some details of their contents and the dates of their composition. The main purpose being to discuss 'Ubaid's satirical works and their possible sources.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, 'Ubaid's lifetime spanned seven decades. However, in contrast with his longevity, the writings which have been mentioned by his biographers or have come down to us are neither vast nor voluminous. This would seem to be partly due not only to the difficult circumstances and instability of the age, but also to the fact that as a libertine poet he was not sympathetic enough towards life and its serious affairs. Thus, when he composed a poem or wrote a treatise, his primary aim was that of entertainment or to provide for his livelihood. With the exception of those panegyrics and lyrics which 'Ubaid composed in praise of the kings or governors of that time, his intention in writing short treatises was mainly in criticism of society, or to mock the circumstances of the age and the narrow minds of his contemporaries. He seems to show little regard for preserving any of his works for posterity.

A. Serious Writings

The extant serious poems of 'Ubaid have been examined for the purpose of the present study, in published editions, and in two

manuscripts¹, and consist of 2,753 couplets which, in the main, form panegyrics, but also quatrains, three tarkīb-bands and a single tarjī'-band. Apart from his lyrical poems (ghazaliyāt), the only worthwhile serious verse is the 'Ushshāq-nāma (Book of Lovers). 'Ubaid composed this mathnawī on 2nd Rajab 751/5th September 1350, and dedicated it to Shāh Shaikh Abū Ishāq, finishing it in two weeks.² In sentiment it is refined and is marked by an easy pace and flowing rhythm, and it seems that 'Ubaid has derived inspiration from a mathnawī with the same name by Fakhr al-Dīn 'Irāqī (d. 688/1289). He also has borrowed two ghazals from Humān al-Dīn Tabrizī (d. 714/1314) in his mathnawīs, and here and there one can see the influence of Nizāmī (d. 614/1235) and in particular the Khusraw and Shirin. 'Ubaid himself acknowledges the master's greatness³, and quotes some of his poems with attribution. It should, however, be noted that there is a difference between the 'Ushshāq-nāma of 'Ubaid and 'Irāqī, for, while the latter is expressing mystical love, our author intends profane love.

Although this mathnawī contains no facetious saying, one does however encounter couplets such as:

مکن زن هر زمان جگر میزند
 ز بهر شوقی تنگی میزند
 که از به غریبی به پارتابی
 بدوئی نیرزد که خدایی

4

1. See Introduction and Bibliography.

2. 'Ushshāq-Nāma, p. 113 of Kulliyāt:

دوم روز از رجب در نون الف ذال (۷۵۱)
 به هر کس باز گفتم قصه خویش
 بر آوردم، چو خاطر کرد یاری

به هر طالع و فرخنده تر مال
 بنظم آوردم این درد دلش
 دهفته، هفتصد بکر از عاری

3. Ibid., p. 97 of Kulliyāt:

نگه کن این سخن چو نغمه گفتند
 اگر در نعل باشی باز کن بار
 به آیینی که می گوید نظر می

خردمندان که در نظم گفتند
 "چو نعل خویش را بای خردار
 بست تو سن مزاج از بد لگامی

4. Ibid., p. 106.

which have a satirical tone as well. This mathnawī has been composed in hazaj-i musaddas-i maqsur metre.¹

Fāl-nāma-i Būrūj (The Fortune Book of the Solar Months). This is a little treatise on fortune telling and horoscopy. It has been written in prose, but a quatrain is inserted at the end of each omen. Although this book is serious in tone, 'Ubaid has not given up his characteristic mocking for fortune-telling and horoscopy and their practitioners and believers.

Fāl-nāma-i Wuhush u Tuyur (The Fortune Book of Beasts and Birds). 'Ubaid composed this book in order to explain how one can take omens from either beasts or birds, and the consequences thereof. This treatise contains sixty quatrains, each one represented by a beast or a bird which 'Ubaid has mentioned in this book. It is unpublished. The MSS contain some fine illustrations.

Mathnawī-i Sang Tarāsh (The Mathnawī of the Stone Cutter). This is a mathnawī in 86 couplets which has been composed in the style of Rūmī's mathnawī. In many places it reminds us of the mathnawī's famous story of Moses and the Shepherd (Mūsā wa Shabān).² It includes also many of Rūmī's vocabulary and phrases, but is marred by many weak couplets which do not suit 'Ubaid's strong style and sense of harmony. It would therefore seem that an unknown religious author has composed it. Many couplets are out of rhyme, and there are plenty of grammatical mistakes. At any rate, the author had neither Rūmī's elegant style, nor the creative talent of 'Ubaid. It is undated. It does not exist in any of the two manuscripts which are in my access.

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1. See Shams Qais-i Rāzī, al-Mu'jam fi Ma'āyir-i Ash'ār al-'Ajam, pp. 78-81; L. P. Elwell-Sutton, The Persian Metres, pp. 55-59.
 2. Mathnawī, Book 2, p. 199.

Another book of parables and celebrated proverbs is found in manuscript anthologies where 'Ubaid's writings are collected, under the title Nawādir al-Amthāl (The Rare Parables). This treatise is also unpublished.¹ The contents of this unpublished treatise are of little interest and mostly derived from 'Ubaid's predecessors such as Ibn Qutaiba, Tha'ālibī (d. 430/1038) and in particular Rāghib al-Isfahānī. Nevertheless, 'Ubaid has again shown his talent and taste in their collection and rewriting.²

B. Satirical Writings

Although satire has been characterised as idle talk, 'Ubaid, even when he talks idly, is not uttering nonsense. In fact, his satires and facetious sayings have a serious purpose. That is to say, the tone of his writing is different from that of all serious writers. He speaks of serious matters and the real problems of people in the community by clothing them in garments of irony and wit. One can say that the manifestation of 'Ubaid's artistry is laid in his subtle social criticism. From this point of view his contribution to Persian literature is unique, and "it must be remarked that if there is anyone in Persian literature who can really be termed a satirist, then it is he."³

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1. It consists of sixteen leaves in the British Museum MS. Nothing humorous can be found in it, and it seems 'Ubaid noted them at random, for there is no trace of classification in it, like most of his treatises. There are 371 proverbs and sayings, and 191 couplets in it. Again, the author mentions none of his sources, but the poems belong mostly to the famous Arabic poets including Abū Nuwās, Mutanabbī and Abū Tammām.
 2. This is the book that 'Ubaid dedicated to 'Alā' al-Dīn Muḥammad, who was Abū Ishāq's vizier. See also pp. 160-163 above.
 3. Jan Rypka, History of Iranian Literature, p. 272.

In fact, discovering fine points and realising the exact failures and contradictions in human life, is not possible for everybody; it needs a rare talent for observation, and 'Ubaid was fully endowed with this gift. Another facet of 'Ubaid's artistry in critical satire was his *creative* power. Perhaps, every educated person knows that however fresh the witty sayings and tales may be, when they are repeated, they lose their immediacy. But 'Ubaid adds new meanings which carry the reader enthusiastically to the end. Furthermore, he possesses a "sweet tongue". It happens that a single word may weaken a poem or a speech, minimizing its effect and rendering it commonplace. Therefore, the parting line between witticism and effective point on the one hand, and cold insipid narrative on the other is very narrow; and 'Ubaid's writings in this respect and from the standpoint of expression are an example of both eloquence (fasāhat) of style and clarity (balāghat) of meaning.

Above all, the most influential element of 'Ubaid's writing which attracts the reader is his brevity. Wit does not tolerate, at least in Persian, verbosity. It suits only brevity and should explain the subject in few but necessary words which are harmonious as well as being intelligible to every one. It needs a short introduction and preparation of the reader or audience's mind, and when the key phrase which contains the point of the story has been uttered, nothing will remain. Unlike some other Persian satirists, he does not stretch his minimum material to the maximum length; as soon as he has made his point, he stops. He always writes with regard for the Arabic-Persian saying that "Speech should be concise and compelling" (al-kalām mā qalla wa dalla).

It is true that there is bitter satire and a coarse element in 'Ubaid's writing, which to some extent makes it difficult to recite in an assembly, especially among conventional moralists, however one could say that this bitterness or coarseness was a kind of reaction against the wide-spread corruption of the period. The more the latter increased, the harsher became the former. Again,

It can be said that the bitterness of 'Ubaid's witticism and his frankness suit other aspects of Eastern life, because in these areas everything is hard and acute: the colours, perfumes, dances, love affairs, sensations, and even eyes and faces are mostly alive and penetrating; the sun of the East is brighter than that of the West, therefore witticisms, mockeries, ridicules and humours of these areas, too, should be suitable to other aspects of their life. Thus, one should forgive 'Ubaid for doing so, and not criticize him. 1

Besides, if humour is only equivalent to laughter in 'Ubaid's writings, as in some other writers, then one could scarcely feel more interest in him than in others who are now forgotten. We do not forget him, however, because he tries to awaken, not only our sense of humour or laughter, but also a great number of other faculties. He professes, even hiddenly, to awaken and direct our love, our pity, our kindness, our scorn for untruth and irrational pretention, imposture and our tenderness for the weak, the poor, the oppressed and the unhappy. In short, he comments on almost all ordinary actions and passions of life to the best of his means and abilities.

'Ubaid lived in a period in which the kings and rulers and their ministers were often hypocrites, the style of 'Ubaid's criticism, also,

1. Parwiz Atabaki, introduction to 'Ubaid's Kulliyāt, p. 32. It is necessary to mention here that by referring to these qualities it is not meant to attribute any superiority to the Eastern peoples; these are just climatic conditions, no more.

inevitably took the shape of the age. The Jalāyerid Sulṭān Uwais (d. 776/1374), with all his artistry, patronage of learning and poetic gifts, used to confess publicly his passion for a young boy, and his poet Salmān of Sāwa (d. 778/1376) composed the mathnawī Firāq-nāma (The Book of Separation) on this subject.¹ The Muẓaffarid Mubārīz al-Dīn-i Muḥammad, well known for his breaking of wine jars and religious pretensions, as a result of which Ḥāfiẓ and Shāh Shujā' used to call him muhtasib² (officer of public morals), never gave up hypocrisy, ruthlessness and cruelty. Even Abū Ishāq-i Injū, whose praise both 'Ubaid and Ḥāfiẓ have sung, was fond of loose-living and hedonism; and on occasions, he too killed people and committed injustice.³ The judges, witnesses ('udūl) and religious authorities did not fear committing any inadmissible act, and in short, as Ḥāfiẓ puts it, because "the Shaikh, the memorizer of the Koran, the muftī and the muhtasib were acting hypocritically", people like 'Ubaid and Ḥāfiẓ had no choice except to "drink wine" and laugh at those circumstances and make fun of them.⁴

But this laughter was not a pure joy, "it was a laughter which reveals sympathy, pity and ridicule, and at the same time vengeful."⁵

1. Bayānī, Shīrīn, Tārīkh Āl-i Jalāyer, pp. 33-4; 50-51.

2. Ḥāfiẓ, Dīwān, p. 30, gh. 41:

اگر چه باده فرخ بخش و باد گل بیز است بیایست چنگت مخورم که مُتسب تیر است

3. Dawlatshāh, Tadhkirā, p. 293:

«... با این حال شیخ ابوسحق مردی سخت گش و مغرور و ستم پیش و عیاش بود، حتی در مقابل خطر دشمن نیز دست از عیش و نوش بر نمی داشت، چنانکه در موقع محاصره شیراز بدست امیر مبارزالدین غالب اوقات را در خواب مستی می کرد.»

4. Ḥāfiẓ, Dīwān, pp. 135-6, gh. 200:

می خور که شیخ و حافظ و مفتی و متسب چون نیک بنگری هم نروزمی کنند.

5. Iqbāl, introduction, p. 19.

Thus, it seems it would not be fair to think of him as a bold satirist, or a facetious storyteller, because he neither satirized individuals, nor was his aim to benefit in his personal life by threatening others.

The following is a detailed list of 'Ubaid's satirical writings:

Akhlāq al-Ashrāf (Ethics of the Aristocracy). 'Ubaid composed this treatise in prose, and finished it in 740/1340. He exposes, by way of mocking and sometimes ribaldry, the disorder of that period, indicating the corruption of society and individuals. To do this, he compares the "ancient moral ideals" with morality as it really was. Jokes, humour, sarcasm and censure are the instruments he uses. This treatise is fully discussed in Chapter V of this present thesis (The Topics of 'Ubaid's Satire).

Ta'rifāt (Definitions), or Dah Fasḥ (Ten Sections). It is composed in prose, and is undated. This is just a tract of only seven pages and 253 definitions. A few samples of which will suffice to show the vigorous character of 'Ubaid's irony and mockery:

The World: that place wherein no creature can enjoy peace.
 The Man of Learning: He whom all men curse.
 Bribery: That which does the business of the helpless.
 The Lucky Man: He who never sees the judge's countenance.
 The Preacher: An Ass.
 The Poet: A greedy coxcomb.
 The Shaikh: Iblis.
 The Devils: His followers.
 The Ḥājī: He who swears falsely by the Ka'ba. 1

By these little definitions 'Ubaid lays his opinion before us with a grave simplicity and a perfect neatness, but at the same time with much originality. In this pamphlet, 'Ubaid classifies those words

1. Ta'rifāt, pp. 159-161 of Kulliyāt.

which are used among ordinary people, in ten sections. He then gives to each of them his own definition, each of which although short, is precise; and although these meanings have not found their way into the dictionaries, and are not scholarly, or as comprehensive as those of the logicians, at the same time each of them is as meaningful and sharp as a major article. He pays no heed to other scholars' definitions; he gives fresh meaning to each of them, a satirical and critical meaning. Those who are familiar with the circumstances which prevailed in his age, are bound to agree that these definitions are much more realistic than those standard formulas in the usual works of reference, and although this is an uneven work, its moments of inspiration offer some of the finest lines 'Ubaid ever wrote.

The sections are as follows:

1. On the World and the Things that are in it; 2. On the Turks and their retinue; 3. On the Nobles and their customs; 4. On the Shaikhs and their entourage; 5. On the Judges and their retinue; 6. On the Craftsmen and functionaries; 7. On Wine and its appurtenances; 8. On "Bang" and its appurtenances; 9. On Headmanship and its supplements; 10. On the Nature of Men and Women.

There are two supplements to this small pamphlet which are named respectively Ta'rifāt-i Mullā du Piāza and "The Definitions which have been quoted from the European Books"¹, in the same style as the Ta'rifāt itself. But, as usual, here too he gives no evidence, and says nothing of his sources. These two pamphlets consist of 193 minor definitions.

Risāla-i Sad Pand (The Book of a Hundred Counsels). Composed in 750 in prose, this treatise, as its name implies, comprises a hundred

1. "تعريفاتی که از کتب افرنجیه نقل شده است"

aphorisms, some serious and not very appealing, such as "O dear friends! make the most of life"; "Do not defer until tomorrow the pleasures of today", some ribald and ironical such as, "So far as you are able, refrain from speaking the truth, so that you may not be a bore to other people"; "Do not take lodgings in a street where there is a mināret, so that you may be safe from the annoyance of cacophonous mu'adhdhīns."

The contents of this treatise will be discussed further in Chapter V.

Rīsh Nāma (The Book of the Beard). This is in mixed prose and verse. It is a short treatise of about 11,000 words, dealing with the beard and its ruthlessness, and the sufferings that the handsome youths of the period bear by its attack on their faces. 'Ubaid ironically calls the beard Abū 'l-Mahāsin (the source of goodness). It is undated.

This booklet deals also with the moral corruption of the age, especially of the nobles and rulers who sought nothing in life save revelry and pleasure; handsome youths, as long as they are beardless, enjoyed these nobles' affections and fondlings, but when they grew beards, were unloved and abandoned. He inserts into his composition, here and there, a couplet or a hemistich, or a fahlawiya which usually set into the prose like a signet in a signet-ring fashioned by a proficient master. In accordance with the standard practice of the prose, he sprinkles Koranic verses and traditions throughout his prose. He often interpolates Sa'dī's poems in this tract.¹

1. Rīsh-Nāma, p. 44 of Kulliyāt:

« روح پاکِ سعدی را در خطِ بآدم که بگردید :
 تو پار برفتہ ای چو آہو اسال بیامدی چو لوری
 سعدی خطِ سبز دوست دارد نہر علفی جوالدوزی ... »

The following is a short excerpt from this humorous writing in the form of a dialogue between the poet himself and beard. He writes:

I was at home. Suddenly a corner of the house split, and from this split a person emerged; a person whom nobody should see, even in a dream. He said, "Peace be with you!" From his dreadful appearance I began to tremble. I rose at once and asked him, "Who are You? Are you Iblīs, or the 'Ifrīt (demon), or the Ghūl (Giant), or the angel of death?" "Hey! hey! don't you know me?" the beard shouted at me. "They call me 'the beard Abū 'l-Mahāsīn', and I have come to do justice to you and your disloyal beloved." Hearing this claim, I whispered:

If a man's virtues are such as you
What do you suppose his vices will be like?" 1

Then the conversation between 'Ubaid and the beard begins, and 'Ubaid tries by all possible means to convince the beard that his time is over. It seems to me that 'Ubaid at the time of composing this treatise had Sa'dī's "Debate with Pretender"² in mind, and has used his style of writing, there being many phrases in both which are alike, although the subject-matter is completely different.³

Risāla-i Dilgushā (The Joyous Treatise). This treatise is the largest of all 'Ubaid's satirical writings. At the beginning of this booklet the author explains why he occupied himself with humour, satire and ribaldry. I have no doubt that what 'Ubaid has gathered in this

1. Kulliyāt, p. 45:

"آزاکه مخابنش تو باشی گوئی که مخابش چه باشد؟"

2. Gulistān, pp. 116-21, "Jidāl-i Sa'dī bā Mudda'ī dar bayān-i Tawāngaruwa darwīshī".

3. In developing his ideas, 'Ubaid also seems to have relied on the fifth bāb of the Gulistān "On Love and Youth", in which Sa'dī, too, reproaches his beloved for growing a beard. See Gulistān, pp. 86-101, especially the anecdotes which begins with the following words:

"درغفران جوانی شپا که افتد ودانی باش هدی سرو ستری در شتم ..."

book, is mainly not his own, and apart from a few Arabic anecdotes and about 180 Persian ones that are original, and were probably inspired by his own circumstances, he has collected them all from previous Arabic and sometimes Persian writers, or has translated them into Persian. However, he has not confined himself to sheer imitation or extraction. Firstly he changes the personalities and replaces them with familiar names for the sake of his readers; secondly, his artistry in translation is splendid, and this is not an easy task, because there are many others who have attempted the same but failed. They are mere translators. 'Ubaid, however, is a translator and a great humorist, and how noble the humour is here! How just and how honest! How perfect the image! It may even be held that on many occasions his translation has come out better than the original. This single fact testifies to 'Ubaid's thorough artistry and education both in Persian and Arabic.

As it has been indicated here and there in the course of this thesis, we do not know how and why 'Ubaid began to write satire and ribaldry, and what Dawlatshāh and others have said seems to a great degree forged. 'Ubaid, however, gives away his intention of writing satire. He writes at the beginning of this Risāla the following lines:

So says the author of this treatise and the writer of this article 'Ubaid-i Zākānī ... that the virtue of speech, on which the excellence of human beings rests, is of two sorts: First is serious (jidd) and the second is satire (hazl), and the superiority of seriousness is obvious, and just as constant seriousness produces vexation, permanent playfulness, too, causes humiliation and diminution of honour, and the ancients have said of this:

As yearly seriousness gnaws at people's spirit,
Daily playfulness, too, produces disgrace. 1

1. Risāla-i Dilgūshā, p. 89 of Kulliyāt:

”جِدِّ هِمَّ سَلَّ جانِ مردم بخُرد هَزَلِ هِمَّ رُوزِ آبِ مردم ببرد“

But if [the people], by way of repelling boredom and causing amusement, for as the sages would have said it, ribaldry in speech is like salt in food (1), occupy themselves with a sort of ribaldry, they should be excused, for our masters have justified it to this extent. 2

Thus, according to this introduction I penned some witty points and anecdotes which were in my mind, containing two parts: first, Arabic, the second Persian, and I named it "The Joyous Treatise" because, in order to study these pages it is necessary to have a cheerful heart and a joyous mind. God, the Creator, grants these two favours to us all. 3

It is understood from this introduction that 'Ubaid's satire or ribaldry proceeds from adversity, and "by way of repelling boredom and deriving amusement"; and towards the end he wishes that "God should grant to all a cheerful heart and joyous mind"; this denotes, in its turn, that in consequence of the changes and turmoil of that period, he had neither "a cheerful heart", nor a "joyous mind". One can, therefore, say that 'Ubaid believed in satire and ribaldry as the means of ridding himself of grief or disaster, and no more.

The Arabic section of the Risāla-i Dilgushā contains ninety-three anecdotes, and as the sources can be determined, forty-one of them come from Abu 'l-Qāsim Raghīb al-Iṣfahānī's Muhāḍarāt al-Uḍabā'; five from Ibn Qutaiba's Uyūn al-Akhbār; five from al-Jāḥiẓ's Kitāb al-Bayān,

1. "الْمَزَلُ فِي الْكَلَامِ كَالْبَلْعِ فِي الطَّامِ"

2. Ibid., pp. 89-90. Cf. Raghīb, Muhāḍarāt, vol. I, p. 79: "Abū Bakr said, 'I was with the Prophet and his poet was reciting a poem to him. 'Do you listen to both the Koran and poetry?' I asked him. 'Sometimes this and sometimes that,' replied the Prophet. "

"قَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ: كُنْتُ عِنْدَ النَّبِيِّ وَمُشَاعِرُهُ يُنْشِدُهُ عِنْدَهُ. فَقُلْتُ لَهُ: اسْمَعْ وَرَقْرَأْ؟" فَقَالَ: "هَذَا مَرَّةً" وَهَذَا مَرَّةً."

3. Risāla-i Dilgushā, p. 80.

and Kitāb al-Haywān; five from Ibn al-Jawzī's Akhbār al-Zirāf wal-Mutamājinīn. All these authors precede 'Ubaid, but the author whose style of writing is much like 'Ubaid's is Rāghib (d. 502/1108, some 270 years before 'Ubaid's death). In some places, both writers' words are identical, and therefore one can easily imagine that 'Ubaid had his book in his possession, and he constantly was referring to it. It is disappointing that our author has not mentioned his source and the name of his compatriot. This criticism, however, is only a relative one, because there were many authors in Islamic culture who borrowed from their forebears without acknowledging them.

Here follow some examples of both the Arabic and Persian portions of the Risāla with reference to their sources (the complete text of the anecdotes with their sources are given in the final chapter of this thesis).

A. Arabic Examples

- T)* Once Anusharwān was sitting in his court to hear the grievances. A short man came crying, "I am oppressed." "Nobody is able to do injustice to a short man," said Anusharwān. "O prince! the man who oppressed me is shorter than me," said the crying man. The King laughed and ordered justice to be done to him. 1
- S) It is said that Kasrā was sitting in his court to hear grievances. A short man came to him crying, "I am oppressed", and the King paid no attention. The chief priest (mubad-i mubadān) was in attendance. Addressing the king he said, "Do justice to him." "Nobody is able to do injustice to a short man," replied the King. "He who oppressed me is shorter than me," answered the man. 2

* T text; S source.

1. Dilgūshā, p. 90 of Kulliyāt:

”جَلَسَ أَنْوْشَرَوَانُ يَوْمًا لِلْمَظْلَمِ . فَأَقْبَلَ إِلَيْهِ رَجُلٌ قَصِيرٌ يَصِيحُ : ”أَنَا مَظْلُومٌ“ . قَالَ كَسْرَى : ”الْقَصِيرُ لَا يُظْلِمُهُ أَحَدٌ“ . فَقَالَ : ”إِيَّاكَ الْمَلِكُ الَّذِي ظَلَمَنِي أَقْصَرُ مِنِّي“ . فَضَحَّكَ دَامِرٌ بِإِضَافَةٍ :

2. Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 286:

”قَالَ إِنَّ كَسْرَى جَلَسَ لِلْمَظْلَمِ . فَتَقَدَّمَ إِلَيْهِ رَجُلٌ قَصِيرٌ يَصِيحُ : ”أَنَا مَظْلُومٌ“ وَهُوَ لَا يَلْتَفِتُ إِلَيْهِ . فَقَالَ الْمُوْبَذَانُ مُوْبَذٌ : ”أَنْصِفْهُ“ . فَقَالَ : ”إِنَّ الْقَصِيرَ لَا يُظْلِمُهُ أَحَدٌ“ . فَقَالَ الرَّجُلُ : ”إِنَّ الَّذِي ظَلَمَنِي هُوَ أَقْصَرُ مِنِّي“ .

- T) A woman called her husband a cuckold and pauper. "Praise be to God that I have no fault, because the first comes from you, and the second comes from God," replied the man. 1
- S) A woman called her husband a cuckold and a pauper. "The first is from God, and the second is from you, thus what is my fault?" said the husband. 2
- T) A group of friends accompanied each other on a journey, and a parasite was among them. Each of them intended to share in the expenses by paying for something. One said, "I will buy the bread", and "I will buy the sweetmeats," said another, while the parasite was silent. "What do you want to provide?" they asked him. "Only the curse [of God]," replied the parasite. They all laughed and exempted him from paying. 3
- S) A group agreed with each other to share their expenses on a journey, and a pauper was among them. "I undertake this," said one of them. "I undertake that," said another man. Then they asked the pauper, "What are you going to undertake?" "The curse of God, the angels and the people," replied the man. 4

1. Dilgūshā, p. 92: "قَالَتْ امْرَأَةٌ لِرَوْحِهَا 'يَا دَلِثُ يَا مَفْلِسُ'. فَقَالَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ لَيْسَ لِي ذَنْبٌ إِلَّا مَا آتَاكَ مِنْكَ وَآلَتَانِي مِنَ اللَّهِ."

2. Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 227: "وَقَالَتْ امْرَأَةٌ لِرَوْحِهَا 'يَا دَلِثُ يَا مَفْلِسُ'. فَقَالَ وَاحِدَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَوَاحِدَةٌ مِنْكَ قَدْ رَزَيْتَنِي؟"

Almost thirty-three years after Rāghib's death, Sanā'ī of Ghazna versified this anecdote as follows (Ḥadīqa, p. 731):

آن شنیدی که بود پنبه زنی مفلِس و قَلْبَانِش خواند زنی
گفتش ای زن مرا بیا دانی مفلِس و قَلْبَانِ حرا خوانی
چه بود حرم من چو باشم مفلِس از چرخ و قَلْبَانِ از زن

3. Dilgūshā, p. 97: "صَانَعَتْ قَوْمٌ فِي السَّفَرِ وَفِيهِمْ طِفْلٌ عَزَمُوا عَلَى أَنْ يُخْرِجَ كُلُّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمْ شَيْئًا لِلنَّفَقَاتِ. فَقَالَ أَحَدُهُمْ: عَلَيَّ يَخْبَرُ. وَقَالَ آخَرُ: عَلَيَّ الْحُلَاوُ وَالطِّفْلِيُّ سَكَنَ. فَقَالُوا لَهُ: وَمَا عَلَيْكَ؟ قَالَ: اللَّعْنَةُ... فَضَمُّوا مِنْهُ وَعَقَرُوهُ عَنْ النَّفَقَةِ."

4. Muhādarāt, vol. II, p. 697: "وَنَافَعَتْ قَوْمٌ وَفِيهِمْ مَفْلِسٌ. فَقَالَ أَحَدُهُمْ: عَلَيَّ كَذَا، وَقَالَ الْآخَرُ: وَأَنَا عَلَيَّ كَذَا. إِلَى أَنْ قَالُوا لِلْمَفْلِسِ: وَأَنْتَ وَمَا عَلَيْكَ؟ فَقَالَ: لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ جَمِيعَةٍ."

B. Persian Examples

The second portion of the Joyous Treatise is Persian and has 269 anecdotes. About seventy of these have been translated into Persian from various Arabic sources, again mostly from Rāghib's Muhāḍarāt. The remaining anecdotes which seem original contain a good deal of information about the author's period. In this latter part of Persian anecdotes, 'Ubaid takes the opportunity to give us a very informative picture of corruption and the ethical bankruptcy of his fellow-poets and contemporary characters, as well as the notable personalities of the earlier century, men such as Quṭb al-Dīn Shirāzī (d. 710/1311), Majd al-Dīn Hamgar (d. 686/1287) and the like. It is in this part that we come across also unknown semi-historical Persian jesters and satirists of an earlier period such as Abū Bakr Rubābī and Talkhak, who was Sultān Maḥmūd of Ghazna's favourite jester, mention of whom is not to be found elsewhere.

The following are two anecdotes which 'Ubaid has translated from Arabic:

- T) Once they were carrying a corpse along a road. A poor man was standing with his little son. The son asked his father, "What is in this coffin?" "A human being," replied the father. "Where are they carrying him?" asked the boy again. "To a place where there is no food, no firewood, no clothes, no bread, no drink, no silver, no gold and no carpets." "So, are they carrying him to our house?" said the boy. 1

1. Dilgūshā, p. 144:

« جَنَازَهی را به راهی می بُرند . درویشی با پسر بر سر راه ایستاده بودند . پسر از پدر پرسید که : « بابا در اینجا چیست ؟ » گفت : « آدمی » . گفت : « کجاایش می بُرند ؟ » گفت : « بیای که نه خوردن باشد نه پوشیدن ، نه آب و نه نان و نه هیزم و نه آتش و نه درویش و نه بوریا و کلیم » . گفت : « بابا مگر بجانه ما می بُرندش ؟ »

- S) A little boy heard a woman in front of a coffin [weeping and] saying, "They are taking you to a house in which there are no covers, no carpets, no suppers, no breakfasts and no light." "Are they bringing him to our house?" asked the little boy of his father. 1
- T) A man of Shirāz was boiling bang (henbane) in a mosque. The servant of the mosque seeing him began to abuse him. The man of Shirāz looked at him, and observing that he was lame, bald and blind, he yelled at him, O man! God has not showed you so much kindness that you should be so fanatical about His house." 2
- S) A dog came to a mosque and pissed on the mihhrāb. There was a monkey there. "Are you not ashamed of pissing on the mihhrāb?" said the monkey to the dog. "God has not created you so beautiful that you should be thus zealous about Him," replied the dog. 3

Now, let us return to the original portion of 'Ubaid's treatise.

Here we find that a total of 180 anecdotes are 'Ubaid's own, and seemingly are mostly the outcome of his reflections on his own age, or his conversations and companionships with the nobles and other jesters of the period. All these events inspired him to compose these anecdotes;

1. Muhāḍarāt, vol. IV, p. 201: «سَمِعَ صَبِيٌّ صَغِيرًا امْرَأَةً فِي جَنَازَةٍ تَقُولُ: تَذْهَبُونَ بِيْكَ إِلَى بَيْتٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ غِطَاءٌ وَلَا وَطْأٌ وَلَا غِثٌ وَلَا فِئْدَةٌ وَلَا مِرَاجٌ.»
فَقَالَ الصَّبِيُّ: يَا أَبَتِ، إِنَّهُمْ تَذْهَبُونَ بِرِّيْ إِلَى بَيْتِنَا؟»

Incidentally, Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 672/1293) almost a hundred years before 'Ubaid had versified this anecdote in Persian, which begins with the following line:

کودک در پیش مآبوت پدر ناله‌ها می‌کرد و بر می‌کوفت سر
گای پدر آخر کجایت می‌بردند تا ترا در زیر خاک بپرند...

2. Dilgūshā, p. 120 of Kulliyāt:

«شیرازی در مسجد بنگ می‌نخست. خادم مسجد بدو رسید با او در سخاقت آمد. شیرازی در دلو نگاه کرد مثل بود و کل و کور. لغزه‌ای کشید و گفت: ای مردک! خدا در حق تو چندان لطف نکرده است که تو در حق خانه او چنین تعصب می‌کنی.»

3. Muhāḍarāt, vol. IV, p. 707:

«دَخَلَ مَلَبٌ مَسْجِدًا فَبَالَ فِي الْحَرَابِ وَكَانَ هُنَاكَ قَرْنٌ فَقَالَ لَهُ: مَا كُنْتَنِي تَبُولُ فِي الْحَرَابِ؟» فَقَالَ: مَا أَخْشَنَ مَا صَوَّرْتَ حَتَّى تَتَعَصَّبَ لَهُ؟»

the personalities therein being either his contemporaries, or nearly so. Here are a few samples:

A rustic once attended a sermon. The preacher was elaborating, "The Ṣirāṭ bridge will be thinner than a hair, sharper than a sword, and on the day of resurrection, everybody must pass over it." The naïve man rose and asked, "O Mawlānā! will there be any ring or handle with which one can grasp and pass thereover?" "No," replied the preacher. "In that case you are laughing at your beard, I swear by God that even a hen is not able to pass over such a bridge," replied the rustic. 1

A man asked Mawlānā 'Aḍud al-Dīn Ijī, "Why did people claim divinity and prophethood in the period of the caliphs, but not nowadays?" "Because they have suffered so much starvation and oppression that they have forgotten both God and the Prophet," replied Mawlānā. 2

In these anecdotes 'Ubaid spreads his wings in the realm of religion and satirizes fearlessly all kind of superstitions which threatened secular thinking and logical reasoning. In these tales, he also refers to cities like Qazwīn, Shiraz, Ardabil, Bukhārā, Hamadān, Shūstar, Qum and Iṣfahān, and both the cleverness or stupidity of their inhabitants. There are many references (almost 21) to Qazwīnīs with whom 'Ubaid sadly has no sympathy. He is constantly gibing at the stupidity of the city's inhabitants. Of the

1. Dilgūshā, p. 130:
 "لَمَّا كُنِيَ فِي مَجْلِسٍ دَعَا ضَرْشِدَ دَاعِظٍ كَقِيْلَ: صِرَاطُ اَزْمُوِي بَارِكْتَ تَرَبَّاسْتِ دَاوَمْتُ تَرَبَّزْ،
 وَرَوِي قِيَامَتِ هَمَّ كَسْ رَا بَرَاو بَايَدِ كَذَنَتِ! لَمَّا كُنِيَ بَرَضَايَتِ دَكُنَتِ دَمَوْلَانَا آتِي هَمَّ
 دَاوَا بَرِي نِي يَا مَجِيْرِي بَاشَدِ كَذَنَتِ دَرِ آتِي بَا زَنَدَ وَبَكَا زَنَدَ! كَقِيْلَ دَنَهَ، كَقِيْلَ دَنِيكْ بِي
 بَرِيشِ مَوْزِي خَنَدِي، وَالدَّ اَكْرَمُغْ بَاشَدِ اَزِ آتِي نَوَا اَزِ كَذَنَتِ!"

2. Dilgūshā, p. 110:
 "شَخْصِي اَزِ مَوْلَانَا حُضْرُ الدِّينِ بَرَسِيْدِ كِهْ حَوِيْنِ اَسْتِ كِهْ دَرِ زَمَانِ خَلَفَاءِ مَرْدَمِ دَعْوِي خُدَايِ
 وَبَغِيْرِي بِيَا مِي كَرْدَنَدِ وَ اَكُنُوْنِ نَمِي كُنْتَنَدِ. كَقِيْلَ دَمَرْدَمِ اِيْنِ رَوْزِ كَا رَا حَقْدَانِ اَزِ ظَلَمِ وَ كَرْسَنِي
 اِفْتَادَهْ اَسْتِ كِهْ نَهْ اَزِ خُدَايِ بِيَا مِي اَيِدِ وَ نَهْ اَزِ بَغِيْرِي!"

twenty-one references to the city in this treatise, in only one does he speak of their cleverness and generosity. On the contrary, he praises the beauty of Shirāz and the tolerance of its inhabitants.¹

Ash'ār-i Hazliya wa Tadmīnāt (Satirical and Parodic Poems).

Those poems which one can term satirical in its exact meaning total altogether 299 couplets including a tarjī'-band in forty-three couplets, in which the satirist advocates masturbation; parodies and fragments (tadmīnāt u qata'āt) in 137 couplets and 51 quatrains (rubā'iyat) in 102 couplets. One of the most comic passages of Zākānī is a poem in ten couplets in the Firdawsian style which is inserted in Chapter III, Akhlāq al-Ashrāf (On Chastity). Here the poet describes homosexual intercourse between two famous heroes of the Shāhnāma, Rustam and Hūmān.² In other words, here a successful satire has been couched in the form of epic parody, and the poet finally writes ironically that what these nobles have gained in dignity and glory is the outcome of being catamites!³

1. Kulliyāt, pp. 65 and 70:

مرا دلیت گرفتار خطه شیراز ——— من بریده و شوکرده با تنغم و ناز، یاب
رفتم از خطه شیراز و بیان در خطرم * ——— و کزین رفتن ناچار چه خونین جگرم...
من از این شهر اگر بشکنم در شکتم ——— من از این کوی اگر برگردم در گزدم
بمخود و بیدل و بیار برون از شیراز ——— می ردم و ز سر حشرت بقفا می نگرم

2. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, pp. 133-134 of Kulliyāt:

نهتن موبگشاد شلوار بند ——— برانو در آمد پیل ارجمند
عمودی بر آورد هومان مودود ——— بدان که پیرانش فرموده بود...

3. Ibid., p. 133:

Maktūbāt-i Qalandarān (The Letters of the Derwishes). It is undated, and consists of two letters in which purportedly the derwishes of the age are writing to each other. Considering the style of writing, it seems that 'Ubaid, by writing these two letters in the form of a communication, wants to mock this class of society, because, as we have indicated elsewhere in this thesis, 'Ubaid was not on good terms with sufis and parasitic mystics. In these letters Zākānī tries to convince us that as nobody knows clearly their style of living, so their style of communication too is ridiculous and absurd.

The first letter is from a person whose name is Shahāb al-Dīn Qalandar, to another Qalandar whose name is Abu 'l-Ḥasan. It would seem that both of these characters are imaginary and created by 'Ubaid in order to avoid any confrontation with the sufis and parasitic elements of his age.

Mush u Gurba (The Mouse and the Cat). This is a short qaṣīda of ninety-two verses. It is undated, and the late M. Minovī has hesitated about the authenticity of Zākānī's authorship.¹ However, there is no adequate evidence of 'Ubaid's not being the author despite some irrelevant speculation which in itself is not enough to dispute its authenticity, especially in view of the fact that the author's takhalluṣ and name are given at the end of the qaṣīda in all the available manuscripts and published copies.

This qaṣīda, in the khafīf metre², describes the conspiracy of a cat in the city of Kirmān, and his turning to piety after seizing and

1. M. Minovī, "Qaṣīda-i Mūsh u Gurba", Yaghmā, 1957 (No. 10), pp. 31-38.

2. See for the details of this metre (u u - - u - u - u -). and its zihāf (metrical changes) Shams-i Qais-i Rāzī, al-Mu'jam, pp.139-40; L.P. Elwell-Sutton, The Persian Metres, pp. 44-45.

killing some mice. The tale begins with a formidable poetical description of the cat: no mere cat, a dragon of a cat, a ravenous, lion-hunting cat whose eyes are like amber, his claws sharp like a leopard's, a belly like a drum, a breast like a shield and lion-tailed.¹

Such a cat, in search of food, went out and entered a wine-house and concealed himself behind a wine-jar. In the meantime a mouse appeared from a wall, and jumped on the edge of a jar and started to enjoy drinking wine. Filled with pride, induced by alcohol and ignorant of the danger of his cunning foe, he began to boast of his power, saying:

Where is the cat, that I may wring his head and fill his skin with chaff. The dog is less to me than a contemptible cat, for never he dares to face me in the battle-field. 2

Hearing these puffery, the cat remained silent. But then he suddenly leaped out upon him and seized him. The mouse now was sobered and necessarily changed his tone of speech to entreaty, saying: "I am your slave; pardon me my sins. If I ate dirt [i.e. talked nonsense] I was drunk, and drunkards eat much dirt! I am your slave, your devoted slave."³ It is clear that the cat listened to none of

1. Mūsh u Gurba, p. 169 of Kulliyāt:

از قضاى فلک سبکی گریه	بود چون از دها بگرمانا
شکمش طبل دسینه اش چو سپر	شیر دهم و بلند چشمانا
گریه نیز چشم و شر شکار	گر با چشم و نیز تر گانا
از غریزش بوقت غریز	شیر در ندم شد هوانا

2. Ibid., p. 169:

گفت که گریه تا سرش بکنم	بوتش بگریم ز گاهانا
گریه در پیش من چو مگ باشد	که شود رو برو بمیدانا

3. Ibid., p. 170:

موش گفتا که من غلام توام	عفو کن بر من این گناهانا
مست بودم اگر گئی خوردم	که فردان خوردند منانا!

the mouse's supplication, for he killed and ate him, and then went to the mosque and performed his ablution and repented his mouse-eating: "Oh almighty God, I humbly repent, I'll never again tear mice apart."¹ As he was hypocritically repenting of his evil-doing, another mouse hiding in the pulpit of the mosque heard these uplifting sentiments and hurried to carry the good news of the cat's repentance to the other mice, saying in a verse which has become proverbial, and is alluded to by Ḥāfiẓ:

Good tidings! for the cat has become a devout,
An ascetic, a true believer, a Musulman! 2

To compensate the devout cat's holy decision, they decided to express their gratitude by sending to him a deputation of seven mice with an offering of food and wine. The cat, however, invited them to approach, and sprang upon them like a warrior (mubāriz) on the day of warfare and caught five of them, while the two survivors managed to escape and carry the news of the cat's unchanging nature to the other mice. After a week of lamentation, that is wearing black and throwing dust on their heads, for their lost friends, the mice deployed an army of 300,000 in number, under the command of their sovereign, marched out to battle with the cats in the desert of Fārs. After a

1. Ibid., p. 170:

بارِ اِلٰها که توبه کردم من نذرَم موش را بدندان

2. Ibid., p. 170:

مژدگانے کہ گُربہ تائب شد زاهد و عابد و مُسلِم

See also Ḥāfiẓ, Diwān, p. 91:

ای کِبکِ خوش خرام کُجامی روی بایست رَغزِه مَشُو که گُربِه عابد نماز کرد

fierce battle, the cats were defeated, and the chief offender taken captive, was brought before the king of the mice, who condemned him to die on the gallows. But at the end the cat broke away from his captors, killed the king of the mice and scattered or slew his followers. This fine qaṣīda ends with this couplet:

This amusing and strange story
Is a memento of 'Ubaid-i Zākānī. 1

Though 'Ubaid's satire and critical irony is at its finest here, there are, however, fewer indecent words here than in other places in his writings. Even so, his sense of humour again appears on two or three occasions, and above all where the cat insults the mice with a very famous Turkish abuse², and also in some places there are a few weak and unrhymed couplets which seem disappointing from an able pen such as 'Ubaid's, and above all there is the ending of the verses with the alif-i 'ishbā'³, which is regarded as a sign of imperfection and immaturity in Persian poetry, it is still an unrivalled qaṣīda in its own right. Perhaps it was because of these and a few other points that the late M. Minovī was inclined to dispute 'Ubaid's authorship. However, it must not be forgotten that sometimes it is reasonable in

1. Mūsh u Gurba, p. 173:

هست این قصه عجیب و غریب یادگار عبیدزاکانا

2. Ibid., p. 170:

می شنیدم هر آنچه می گفتم
'آرودادین بیگدیکیم ملان'

3. Shams-i Qais-i Rāzī, al-Mu'jam, p. 176:

« حرف اشباع - و آن الفی است که شعراء متقدم از الفی اطلاق عرب گرفته اند... و آنرا الف اشباع خواندند... و متأخران شعراء این الف را عیبی ماحش می‌نهند و البته جایز ندارند. »

humour to state a reality in simple and even colloquial language as far as possible, and it would seem that a special aspect of Persian humour is that represented by folk verses or tales, which offer little scope for the pedantic and the grammarian, and probably for that very reason they are not included in the traditional histories of Persian literature.

At any rate, this qasida is a popular one, and its contents of both satire and irony are superlatively vigorous; because no poetry has been able to criticize the hypocrisy, aggression and demogogy of the ruling class so far. Its popularity, too, was so great that even some scholars such as Shaikh Bahā'ī (d. 1031/1622) welcomed it by composing a mathnawī under the same name.¹ There are a good many translations of this qasida into other languages including English.

The Analysis of the Tale

Many things have been said concerning the analysis of this celebrated tale, but two viewpoints attract the attention of the reader. The first is that in this tale, 'Ubaid explains, on the one hand, the condition of the people, and on the other, their relationship with the ruling class including judges, shaikhs, worldly and self-serving spiritual leaders. This symbolic tale shows how the latter under the name of religion and justice exercise irreligion and injustice, just like the hypocritical cat. Thus, people even with their numerical majority would be destroyed just as the mice were. They ridicule right, justice, fairness and humanity even while publicly pretending to these virtues. Finally, the population which has been ruled by them became oppressed, and their lives and livelihood left in ruins. This is a general explanation.

1. See Shaikh Bahā'ī, Kulliyāt (Tehran, 1953), pp. 231-249.

Another explanation is that when 'Ubaid was composing this tale, he had an historical event in his mind. From what has been said it will be seen that the tale is a scene in which the author tries to describe allegorically the status of Amīr Shaikh Abū Ishāq Injū, the ruler of Fars vis-à-vis Amīr Mubārīz al-Dīn Muẓaffarī, the ruler of Kirmān. As has been stated elsewhere, a handful of scholars and writers, among them Ḥāfiẓ of Shiraz and our poet were not on good terms with Mubārīz al-Dīn, but, on the contrary, supported Amīr Abū Ishāq. It would seem that the reason that 'Ubaid left the provinces ruled by Mubārīz al-Dīn for Baghdād in order to join the service of the Jalāyerids, and thus incur the hardships of poverty, was his hatred of that intolerant, hypocritical and avaricious king. The evil qualities ascribed to this king are fully based on historical documents. When Mubārīz al-Dīn reached the age of forty, he repented of what he had done in his early life,

the son of Muẓaffar, in 740/1361 (when he was forty years of age — that time which spiritual leaders call real maturity), heard God's call of mercy, and returned to the threshold of God in deep repentance and tried very hard to worship God and pray ... Following the Prophet's tradition he used to walk to the mosque from his house. 1

Again to oppress the tribes of Aūghānī, "he obtained a fatwā (approval) from the 'ulamā' calling them heretics; and regarded fighting them

1. Kutbī, Tārīkh-i Āl-i Muẓaffar, p. 15:

«ابن المظفر در سنه ۷۴۰ که پسر او بچهل سالگی رسیده بود - و تحقیقات آنرا بطریق حقیقی گویند -
دوای رحمت الهی را به لبیک آجابت مقرون گردانید و به توبت و انابت بدرگاه هدایت
رجوع کرد و در طاعات و عبادات اجتهاد تمام بجای آورد و در تتبع سنت مصطفوی از خانه
بمسجد پیاده می رفت.»

as ghazā (holy war); for this reason they called him the warrior king (shāh-i ghāzī)."¹ Ḥāfiẓ, with his own style of humour, was to praise him thus:

The warrior king and world-conquering sovereign
From whose sword blood was dripping. 2

His religious character, however, was accompanied by ruthlessness,

because it happened on many occasions that while he was reading the Holy Koran, they brought a group of Ughānīs before him, and he abruptly killed them with his own hand. He then washed his hands out of respect for the Koran, and then resumed reading it. His son, Shāh Shujā', asked him if he had killed one thousand persons by his own hand; and he replied, "A total of seven or eight hundreds only." 3

In regard to his intolerance and rigour it is sufficient to mention here that his son Shāh Shujā' called him muhtasib. In 755/1352 he swore fealty to the Egyptian Abbasid Caliph al-Mu'tadid Billāh, and left nothing undone in support of religion, by way of pretence, from the breaking of wine-jars to the seizing of heretics. As a result of these events and "because of his extreme policy of punishment people were disgusted with him."⁴

1. Ibid., p. 28: «آذغانیان جالغ [بشکده] داشتند و بر پشت مغول بعظم ایشان می کردند... امر مبارزالدین بفتوای علماء و تکفیر ایشان حاصل کرد و جنگ ایشان را غزای می دانست؛ اورا بدین تشبیه ش. و غازی - می گفتند.»

2. Diwān, p. 367: ش. و غازی خسرو گیتی سنان آنکه از شمشیر او خون می چکید

3. Kutbī, p. 7; Hasanī, Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh, p. 271:

«... و بسیاری بود (ظ: بسیار بودی) که در اثناء قراءت قرآن و نظر در مصحف مجید، جمعی از اوغانیان حاضر کردند، بدست مغول ایشان را بکشتی و دست بکشتی پاسبان مصحف را، و بتلاش مشغول شدی. ش. و شجاع از پدر سؤال کرد که هزار کس در دستش نکشته شده باشد؟ گفت که هفتصد هشتصد آدمی باشد.»

4. Ibid., p. 757:

«بواسطه سیاست زیادت از حد، مردم از او متنفر بودند... چه امر مبارزالدین مردی بغایت تند و سخت سخن و بدخو و خون ریز بود.»

The writer of these words, Kutbī, was the annalist of the Muzaffarid dynasty¹; therefore, one should expect him to praise his patrons according to the spirit of the age. The truth, however, was contrary to this, because the generosity and tolerance of Abū Ishāq was so great that even his enemy's own chronicler could not overlook his virtuous qualities:

Amīr Jamāl al-Dīn Shaikh Abū Ishāq, who was junior in age to all the sons of Amīr Maḥmūd, was however senior of all in morality, even more celebrated than the majority of the kings in generosity; and the fame of his good qualities was greater than that of the sun, and his kindness was extended towards the noble and the humble, the poor and the rich; and in his age none could have recorded a ruler more generous than him. 2

A cross-examination of this fine tale would suggest that the person alluded to in the character of the pious cat, who along with the other cats in the "desert of Fārs" routed the army of mice, is none other than Mubārīz al-Dīn Muḥammad. This is suggested by the fact that 'Ubaid has explicitly quoted both the place of fighting, and the description of Mubārīz al-Dīn's attack.³ And we know that even though

1. Ibid., p. 19: « چون این فقیر آبا عن جد از خدام ایشان بود »

2. Ibid., pp. 31-32: « دهر حال الدین [ابو یحیی] که بس از همه کتر بود، اما به خلاق از همه ستر بود، بلکه از اکثر ملوک بکرم ممتاز و صیت مکاشش از آفتاب مشهورتر، و هواره ابواب فواید و عواید بر شریف و دنی و فقیر و غنی گشاده داشت، و در آن روزگار از وی کریم تر کسی نشان نداده. »

3. Mūsh u Gurba, pp. 170-171 of Kulliyāt:

در بیابان فارس هر دو سپاه رزم دادند چون دلیران

ناگهان گریه حبت بر پشت * * چون مبارز به روز میدانا

Abū Ishāq had come before the army of Kirmān with well-armed troops, "he was defeated without any battle"¹, and fled to Shirāz. Again, the consultation of Abū Ishāq with "a clever, brave and intelligent minister", and sending an "elderly diplomat" who was expert and "sweet-tongued" reminds us of Abū Ishāq's able minister Shams al-Dīn Ṣā'in, and his learned diplomat 'Adud al-Dīn Ijī.

Furthermore, the answer which Amīr Mubārīz al-Dīn gave to 'Adud al-Dīn is similar to that which the cat gave the diplomat of the king of the mice. Abū Ishāq sent 'Adud al-Dīn to Mubārīz al-Dīn in search of peace. Mubārīz al-Dīn, although paid homage to Ijī and gave 5,000 dinārs for his expenditure, but would not accept the request for peace, replying, "Abū Ishāq violated the treaty seven times, and he is unreliable." 'Ubaid elaborates this event with his own sense of humour, and puts the following words into the mouth of the hypocritical cat, who addresses the king of the mice:

Who is the mouse? Vile is the mouse, and viler are his doings;
The mouse has eaten dirt, and I will not move from Kirman
town. 2

Finally, the conclusion of the anecdote of The Mouse and the Cat is quite similar to the actual case of Abū Ishāq and his defeat at the hands of the Mubārīzīd Amīr.³ The iwān of which 'Ubaid describes

1. Kutbī, p. 27: « دشت به شنج به جنگی پشت برادر . »

2. Mūsh u Gurba, p. 171:

گرچه گفتا که موش که خورده من نیایم برون ز کرمانا

3. Ibid., p. 173:

شکر از یک طرف فوری شد شاه از یک طرف گرزانا
از میان رفت فیل و فیل سوار مخزن دماج دگمت و آروانا

the destruction in his tale brings to mind the iwān, which Abū Ishāq had built for himself, in a serious poem 'Ubaid recalls it with great grief:

He built an iwān and a palace similar to paradise
Sitting there happily and enjoying drinking wine
But now the time has changed so rapidly that in the place
of the nightingale
A black-hearted raven has entered there ... 1

There is no doubt that by "nightingale" is intended Abū Ishāq and the "vicious raven" alludes to Amīr Mubārīz al-Dīn, the whole qaṣīda being composed after the event of the former's defeat by the latter.

Finally, it should be mentioned that if our hypothesis as to the nature of the event which inspired this qaṣīda is correct, then the date of its composition may be established as 754/1375 or 758/1379. The first marks the date of Abū Ishāq's flight from Shirāz, the second being the date when he was slain.

1. Kulliyāt, p. 76:

ایران و قصر جنت و فردوس بر فراشت --- دروی نشست و دو قتح ش دمان گرفت ...
جویشی برز محراب بدای بنای گمان --- ملک و خزانه و پسرش در میان گرفت ...
الکون بدان رسید که بر جای عنذلیب --- زانغ رسید دل آمد و دراد مکان گرفت .

CHAPTER V

THE TOPICS OF 'UBAID'S HUMOUR AND SATIRE

Although 'Ubaid was a philosophical poet, he has nothing in common with the professional philosophers who have created systematic arguments encompassing all philosophical matters from the Creation to the resurrection.

His views have no order; they are scattered throughout his shorter treatises, as in a garden where all varieties of flowers are planted at random. If a person wishes to collect a bunch of one kind, he must search a long time picking out his favourites from amongst those different flowers. If he then wishes to make up another bunch of a different variety, he must then adopt the same approach again. The same attitude should be taken to 'Ubaid's unsystematic writings in order to obtain a clearer idea of the various aspects of his religious, political and moral satire and humour. This approach has therefore been adopted here in order to collect together the various random views scattered throughout his works, and they are presented together in sections, each one dealing with his religious, political and ethical views respectively.

Part I. Religious

"Religion", according to 'Ubaid, is the "imitation of the ancients"¹, that is to say, it consists of principles which we have accepted from

1. Ta'rifât-i Mullâ du Plaza, p. 166 of Kulliyât:

« الدِّين : تَقْلِيدُ مُتَقَدِّمِينَ »

our ancestors without any argument; and political, economic, social, climatic and family factors have emphasized them in our minds. In other words, we have been given no opportunity to prove or choose them rationally and independently. True, it has been claimed that "there is no obligation in following a religion"¹; however, on the one hand, anyone who has tried in practice to choose his own religion by dint of rational argument, has been condemned, and even cursed as a heretic by the religious authorities, while on the other hand the stern ordinances of religious leaders and preachers have left no room for free thinking on religious matters. People have, therefore, mostly adopted that which they have inherited from their parents, family and environment.

Again, the difference between religious leaders in regard to religious doctrines and rituals have caused serious splits between people. These differences and the discussions on their validity have removed people from the realities of life, particularly Muslims who have been surpassed by everyone. As 'Ubaid writes, "Muslims have been slapped by every body."² One of the most painful manifestations of this is the schism between Shi'ites and Sunnites, which has caused many grave problems, and even now, is the cause of suffering for people and nations. 'Ubaid wrote many witty parables and anecdotes criticizing both explicitly and implicitly the futility of these differences which have destroyed Islamic unity and have created a real opportunity for careerists and profiteers to gain advantages from these obscure disputes.

1. Koran, 2:257-8.

2. Ta'rifât, p. 165:

”مسلمان : قضا غوارِ ہیکس“

The severe commandments of the religious authorities had also caused great problems in 'Ubaid's lifetime, so that he likens the load of sharī'at to "the mountain of Uhud"¹, which is the pejorative symbol of immensity and weight among the Muslims. "Once," he relates,

they said to a Bedouin, "You have grown old and approaching your end in idleness; therefore, repent and go on a pilgrimage to Mecca." "I have no money to go on a pilgrimage," replied the Bedouin. "Then sell your house," they said. "But when I return, where shall I settle? And if I do not come back, but have settled there as a neighbour of God, will he not ask me, O rascal! Why did you sell your house and come here to stay in my house?" asked the Bedouin. 2

One of the ugliest aspects of clergymen and the so-called spiritual leaders was their interference in the private lives of the people. In fact they practiced in private what they criticized in public; but would not hesitate to persecute people on the slightest pretext, particularly the intelligentsia, free thinkers and the non-religious, and made great show of breaking wine-jars and destroying musical instruments. Although taking bribes was pronounced illegal, indulged in this vice under different religious pretexts. It was due to such circumstances that 'Ubaid and his contemporary Ḥāfiẓ reacted sharply against this intolerable stupidity. In an anecdote he criticizes the caliphs' hypocritically feigning ignorance about minor crimes which they themselves committed.

They brought an old drunkard to Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik.³ A wine-cup and a lute were in his hands. "Break the tanbūr on his head, and beat him with a whip for drinking

1. Ibid., p. 164:

2. Risāla-i Dilgushā, p. 90.

3. Hishām, tenth caliph of the Umayyad dynasty, who reigned from 105 to 125/724 to 743. His reign marks the final period of prosperity and splendour of the Umayyad caliphate. See Ṭabarī, Tārikh al-Rusul wal-Mulūk, III, pp. 312-21; Mas'ūdī, Murūj al-Dhahab, II, pp. 465-79.

”گوہ اُحد : بارِ شریعت“

date-wine (nabīdh)," said the caliph, whilst the drunkard was sad, shedding tears. They asked him, "Are you weeping before we beat you?" "No, my weeping is not for the beating, but for your despising the lute so far that you call it ṭanbūr, and for a wine like misk, which you name date-wine," replied the old man. The caliph laughed at his witticism and pardoned him. 1

At the same time, his fellow-poet Ḥāfiẓ asked with an air of wonderment:

If I and you should drink a cup of wine or two, so what?
For wine is but the blood of grapes, it's not your blood
we're drinking after all. 2

Bigotry and intolerance were sometimes so rigid that even the lower ranks of the religious functionaries, such as the night guards, the servants of the mosques, could darken the people's day by issuing commands on behalf of the religious authorities. "Some muhtasibs passed a drunk Qazwīnī at night. They caught him and shouted, 'Stand up! We want to take you to prison.' 'But if I could walk, I would go to my own house,' replied the Qazwīnī."³ 'Ubaid does not confine his humour to irrational religious creeds, for in many utterances he also criticizes irrational religious arguments between Christians, Jews and Muslims on the one hand, and as stated above between the Sunnites and Shi'ites, on the other:

A Jew asked a Christian, "Which one is superior: Moses or Christ?" "Christ raised the dead (4), while Moses met someone, struck him with his fist and killed him (5);

1. Risāla-i Dilgushā, p. 101.

2. Dīwān, p. 16:

باده از خونِ رزان است نه از خونِ شکار
چه شود گر من در تو کت دو قدح باده خورم

3. Dilgushā, p. 122.

4. Koran, 3:27.

5. Koran, 28:14.

Christ spoke when he was a child in his cradle (1), but Moses after forty years of age said, 'O God! Release the impediment of my tongue so that they can understand me.'" 2

A Christian said to a Magian, "For how long have you given up copulating with your mothers?" (3) "Since they claimed that they produced gods," replied the Magian. 4

In the former anecdote 'Ubaid employs irony to condemn both sides' claims as nonsensical, and at the same time he praises Christ's peacefulness in contrast to Moses' violence. In the second anecdote he takes the Magian's side because of the Christian's irrelevant question.

As has been noted earlier, the disputes between the two prominent sects of Islam, Shi'ite and Sunnite, are one of the main themes in 'Ubaid's satirical criticism, and one can see that he expresses no sympathy with either party. He merely tries to show how silly and ridiculous their disputes are. He does this by his little definitions or humorous anecdotes about how these meaningless differences over the same religion and its interpretation cause disaster and backwardness among the masses. The following are examples of such:

Abū Dūlaf (5) was a Shi'ite, and he used to say,
"Everybody who does not proclaim Shi'ism, is a

1. Koran, 3:41.
2. Koran, 20:28.
3. This is an allusion to an alleged tradition among Muslim scholars that Magians could marry their sisters and mothers! See, for instance, al-Ma'arri, al-Luzumiyvāt, vol. I, p. 319:
 بَنَاتِ الْعَمِّ تَأْتِيْنَ بِأَهْلِ النَّصَارَى وَبِالْأَخَوَاتِ أَغْرَسَتْ الْمَجُوسُ
4. Dilgushā, p. 91. See also Muhādarāt, vol. IV, p. 619.
5. A jester of the second and third centuries A.H. There is no record of his career in the history books, although there are plenty of his nawādir in adab books. As far as I have been able to identify, he was a contemporary to Nazzām, the Mu'tazilite theologian (d. ca. 200/815) and Mu'tasim (d. 227/841) the Abbasid caliph. He went out to fight against Bābak Khurramī (d. 223/837) along side Afshīn, the caliph's general. See al-Aghānī, vol. VIII, pp. 248-9.

bastard." "But I do not ascribe to your doctrine", said his son. "Quite right; I copulated with your mother before purchasing her," replied Abū Dūlaf. 1

A Shi'ite entered a mosque, and seeing the names of the Prophet's Companions inscribed on the wall, attempted to spit upon the names of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. Unfortunately, his spittle landed on the name of 'Alī. The Shi'ite was terribly upset and announced, "You who keep company with them, deserve this!" 2

In Qum, they were beating a man whose name was 'Umrān. "Since he is not 'Umar, why are you beating him?" asked someone. "Not only is he 'Umar, he has even got an extra alif and nūn from 'Uthmān's name," they replied. 3

A preacher was saying from the pulpit that on the day of resurrection the pool of Kawthar will be in the possession of 'Alī, and he will give its water to those men whose anus are pure. Hearing this a Kāshānī rose and said, "O Mawlānā! In that case he has to put it in a pot, and drink it himself." 4

A pederast persuaded a beardless youth for a few dinārs. But when they began, the boy found out the man's penis was too big, and did not accept it. "Either let me do my work, or I will abuse Mu'āwiya, the caliph," said the pederast. "Fortitude in the face of injury of the penis is simpler than hearing abuse of the Amīr al-Mu'minīn." Then he submitted, and during the action he was saying, "O God! This is little in support of your beloved friend. O God! I sacrificed myself to prevent abuse of Mu'āwiya, so you help me to be patient." 5

Thus, it is not strange that the libertine poet looks at many aspects of religious conduct pessimistically, and perhaps for this very reason he calls a "non-religious person" "good-natured" or jocular⁶ while he defines Ramadān as sinking in hell in the hope of paradise,⁷ and in order to escape the voice of the cuckold mu'adhdhin, he advises his readers "not to dwell in a district where there is a minaret."

1. Dilgushā, p. 94.

2. Ibid., p. 106.

3. Ibid., p. 104.

4. Ibid., p. 109.

5. Ibid., p. 146.

6. Ta'rifāt, p. 164:

7. Ibid., p. 165:

"الخوشطبع : بی مذهب"
 "الرمضان : با امید بهشت در دوزخ غلطیدن"

In this respect, one can thus suggest that 'Ubaid was ahead of his time, for he chose to accept the authority of God and His prophets rather than their priests and adherents, and he continually emphasizes the spirit rather than the letter of religious precepts. As the anti-clerical critic of establishment values and practices, 'Ubaid was a figure unique in his age. To illustrate 'Ubaid's views on religious affairs more properly, the following items have been selected from his different treatises.

The Shaikh, Zāhid, Faqīh and Imām

Any student of Persian literature should know that these terms, namely shaikh (venerable religious man), zāhid (devout), faqīh (jurist) and finally imām (religious leader), are words which have a pejorative connection to intellectuals and free thinkers. Almost every great Persian philosopher and poet, and even the most religious ones in the strict meaning of the word, such as Sanā'ī of Ghazna, Khāqānī of Shirwān, Aṭṭār of Nishābūr, Sa'dī and Ḥāfiẓ of Shirāz, have rejected their rigidity and narrow approach to religion.

The intellectuals and free thinkers, for their part, call themselves libertine (rind) or rogue (qallāsh), or sometimes remiss (lā ubālī), showing that they are not very careful about their irrational speeches and inhumane actions in sharp contrast to the former groups. This movement, which began in the fourth century A.H. gradually developed throughout the following three centuries through the works of Sanā'ī, 'Aṭṭār, Rumī, Fakhr al-Dīn 'Irāqī, and Sa'dī, and finally reached its maturity in the eighth century with Ḥāfiẓ and 'Ubaid. To collect and discuss all of them here, would not be an easy task, and anyway is quite beyond the scope of this work. Here, however, an attempt has been made to collect and arrange 'Ubaid's scattered sayings, anecdotes and

short definitions in the hope of offering a clearer picture of his opinion.

In the fourth chapter of definitions he defines shaikh as "Iblis", and shaikh's son as an "ass' foal". He satirically postulates that the disease of the shaikhs is "what is well-known."¹ Imposture is "a shaikh asserting "the unreliability of the world", and evil suggestions are "a shaikh talking of the future life", idle talk is "what the shaikh says about insight", that is to say Godliness and self-knowledge; and their visions and dreams are "delirium", and Devils are "his followers."² In connection with the shaikhs, 'Ubaid does not dispense with those who are in their rank, such as imām, whom he defines as a "sweet-singing bird"³, and in another place as "prayer-monger."⁴

Zāhid or the secluded ascetic is a "parasite" and his recitation is his "device of beggary". Those who follow him are "vagrant pederasts."⁵ To find out, however, 'Ubaid's real evaluation of these useless groups, one has to look at his Joyous Treatise in which he makes his point exactly with great economy of style. The following are some examples, for which no explanation is necessary:

They saw a shaikh who was copulating with a she-ass which was throughout farting, while the shaikh continued to give thanks to God. They reproached him for his conduct. "Why should I not thank God for a penis which can produce such farts from a she-ass, and me a man of ninety years?" replied the shaikh. 6

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1. 'Ubaid means by this indication al-ubnat (prurience of the anus).
 2. Ta'rifāt, pp. 158-159 of Kulliyāt.
 3. Ibid., p. 159.
 4. Ibid., p. 164: « الامام : نازفروش »
 5. Ibid., pp. 165, 159.
 6. Dilgushā, p. 94.

Shaikh Sharaf al-Dīn Daragazīnī (1) asked Mawlānā 'Aḍud al-Dīn, "Where has God made mention of shaikhs in the Koran?" "He places them besides those who know when he commands: Say, are those who know and those who do not know equals?", replied 'Aḍud al-Dīn. 2

A nobleman took a shaikh as a guest to his house and sat him on a rug. The host had hidden a few dīnārs under the rug, which the shaikh found and stole. The host searched for his money and found nothing. "If you suspect someone, let us ask him," said the shaikh. But the host replied, "If I have any suspicions about the others, I am certain about you." 3

These are just a few of the many examples which can be found in the Joyous Treatise, but which must suffice due to limitations of space. However, we may look at a few examples from his treatise One Hundred Counsels, which are completely satirical: "Do not believe the shaikh's speeches, so as not to be misled and not to enter Hell"; "Avoid the neighbourhood of the shaikhs, so that you should live happily"; "In the time of childhood do not withhold your anus from the acquaintance and the stranger, so that in old age you should attain the position of shaikhhood"⁴; "In these times do not seek a devout man (zāhid) who does not play the hypocrite"; "Copulate with the shaikh's sons in order to gain the rewards of the great pilgrimage to Mecca"; "Commit adultery in order to produce children that they may become the future generation of jurists, shaikhs, and the kings' favourites"; "Do not marry the daughter of a shaikh or a jurist, but should this misfortune befall you

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1. Sharaf al-Dīn was contemporary to Mustawfī, the author of Tārīkh-i Guzida. Mustawfī's record suggests that he was a noble man and a great mystic, and also when he was writing his book in 730/1329, Sharaf al-Dīn was still alive, but old. See Tārīkh-i Guzida, p. 676.
 2. Dilgushā, p. 116; Koran, 2:34.
 3. Dilgushā, pp. 140-141.
 4. Sad Band (One Hundred Counsels), pp. 53-54.

involuntarily, have only anal intercourse with the bride, for your offspring are destined to misfortune, they will be beggars, imposters, hypocrites and tormentors of parents."¹

In Ethics of the Aristocracy, he discusses both the "abrogated" and "adopted" doctrines of the period about chastity, and goes on to compare the secular noblemen with the so-called spiritual leaders, noting that "both of these groups commit inhumane actions"; they say, "every man or woman who does not submit to sodomy will always suffer adversity and defeat, and become deprived and abandoned ...". They have proved by categorical reasoning that from the time of Adam to the present day everyone who has not submitted to sodomy is unimaginable ~~to be~~ a ruler, or a minister, a hero ... or a shaikh, or a preacher, or a chamberlain (mu'arrif). The reason for this perverse state of affairs is that many thousands of people in different Islamic cities, namely the judges, shaikhs, jurists, witnesses and their followers gain their means of livelihood in this way. On the topics of "meekness and loyalty" in the above treatise, he describes how even the "great rascals will be disgusted with the companionship of the shaikhs in the future life."²

There are other indications and poems in 'Ubaid's Kulliyāt which show his hatred of shaikhs, even in his lyric poems, where his primary intention was not to satirize their authority and abuse of religious power. It appears that these have occurred spontaneously, for he was obsessed by their behaviour.

The Qādī, 'Udūl and Muhtasib

Among the other groups which have always been criticized by the intelligentsia, learned men and oppressed people in this age, were the

1. Ibid., pp. 58-59.

2. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, pp. 19-20.

judges (quḍāt), dishonest witnesses (ʿudūl) and the muhtasibs. ʿUbaid, too, in his bantering critiques attacks them, and in his realistic anecdotes discloses their dishonesty. The third chapter of the Taʿrīfāt is "On the judges and their entourage".

In this chapter, he defines a judge as a "person whom everyone curses"¹, and his turban as a "mallet", his blood as "sweet and digestible", and his "son as fit for sodomy".² The witness is "a person who never tells the truth", the mediator is the person "who has neither the confidence of God nor the people".³ The judge's relatives are a "pack of troublesome and evil-natured people", and his companion is a "money grabber". Accordingly such judges "will never enjoy an honest bite of food in this world, and in the next will never experience Paradise." What the people of this rank regard as the most legitimate for their acquisition is the property of orphans." The judge's eye is a "bowl which is never filled", his future is noxious; his fate is to be awaited by the guardian of Hell wherein the "lower regions are set aside for him". The court of justice is a house of fire, its threshold the abode of Satan."⁴

The satirist suggests that this court is bounded on all four sides by Hāwiya, Jahīm, Saqar and Saʿir respectively.⁵ In a court of such a judge bribery is "the promoter of the affairs of the poor", therefore, the satirist claims that bribery is the "inner side of the judge's

1. Taʿrīfāt, p. 158 of Kulliyāt: "القاضي: أنك هم اور انفرین کنند."

2. Ibid., p. 158.

3. Ibid., p. 158.

4. Ibid., p. 158.

5. Ibid., p. 158. These four limits are stated in the Koran as being the degrees of Hell. Jahīm is mentioned seventeen times (e.g., 22:9), Hāwiya once (101:6), Saqar once (74:27) and Saʿir seven times (e.g., 4:58; 17:99).

turban." The prosperous man is "he who does not see the judge's countenance", for association with him is dangerous and chaotic. His "friends are always dishonest in their dealings", and consequently in a society where he lives, "justice and fairness are both as rare as a phoenix."¹

In the following anecdotes 'Ubaid also reveals the various aspects of their impiety, bribery, pederasty, their partisanship of the wealthy and neglect of common humanity, their unjustifiable judgements and their adultery:

It is said that there was a woman with very pretty eyes. Once she went to the judge complaining of her husband. The judge, however, was a whore-monger. Being attracted by her eyes and lusting after the rest of her body, he supported her case. When the husband realised the reason for the bias, he pulled his wife's veil, revealing a face that was loathsome. Seeing her face, the judge was dismayed and said, "Woman! Rise and depart, for you have the eyes of one oppressed, and the face of an oppressor." ²

They once asked Talkhak, "What is cuckoldry?" "Don't ask me, ask the judges," replied the witty man. ³

A woman once came to a judge and complained that her husband denied her her rights, although she was a young woman. "I try my best not to be negligent, but I cannot perform the impossible," pleaded the husband. "But I cannot be satisfied with less than five times a night," complained the woman. "I am loath to boast, I cannot manage more than three times," replied the man. "I am in a very awkward position for no case can be brought to me without my having to sacrifice myself and I therefore undertake the other two times," pronounced the pious judge. ⁴

A Turcoman had a law suit with another person. He therefore filled a vessel with plaster, on the top of which he poured some oil, and then presented it to the judge as a bribe. Presuming it full of oil, the judge took the Turcoman's side, and concluded the law suit to his benefit,

1. Ibid., p. 158; Ta'rifāt Mullā du Piāza, pp. 164-165.

2. Risāla-i Dilgushā, p. 121.

3. Ibid., p. 133: "طعنک ترا بر پدیدند که دژونی چه باشد. گفت این مثل را از قاضیان باید پرسید."

4. Ibid., p. 93.

and wrote a statement, sealed it and gave it to the Turcoman. After a week, the truth about the contents of the vessel became clear. The judge summoned the Turcoman, saying, "There is a mistake in the sealed letter, you should bring it back to me so I may correct it." "There is no mistake in the letter, any mistake is in the vessel," replied the Turcoman. 1

Again in the Ethics of Aristocracy, 'Ubaid quotes a marvellous text from one of the greatest interpreters of the Koran, saying, "On the day of resurrection all creatures will pass over Ṣirāṭ bridge with ease, except for judges and their entourage, who will dwell in Hell forever, playing chess with each other."²

The Khaṭīb, Wā'iz and Qārī

Khaṭīb is an Arabic word which means orator, and in Persian they use it for both religious and political purposes. Wā'iz is also an Arabic word which is used only with a religious meaning. Sometimes, however, the meanings and usages become confused. Khaṭāba is an Arabic word as well, which literally means lecture or oratory, but logically it is defined as "words which were used for convincing the public of things that they must accept as the truth."³ Of course, it is not necessary that this conviction should always be by way of pure logical reasoning, particularly among people who are not used to logical argument. It is said that orators, however, should always bear in mind that although it is justified for an orator to use persuasive words and

1. Ibid., p. 131.

2. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, pp. 31-32: "یکی از کبار مفسران در تفسیر این آیه که [وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا] چنین فرموده که مجموع خلائق از صراطِ حق برق می‌گذرند مگر قاضیان و اتباع ایشان که ابد الا بآباد در دوزخ باشند و با هر یک شطرنج آتشین بازی کنند."

3. Ibn Sīnā, al-Shafā', al-Mantiq, al-Khaṭāba, pp. 2-3:

"الخطابة هي التي تعدّ فتوحاً لقناع الجمهور فيما يبيح عليهم أن يصدقوا به."

means (targhibiyyāt) in order to persuade his audience, he is not allowed to use lies, blustering and demagogy, and not to appeal to the passions and prejudices of the people, getting advantage of common ignorance, or to render the right wrong or vice-versa. For, in that case, oratory would become fallacy or sophistry and lose its real purpose, and thus there would be no difference between an orator and a sophist.

The name sophist, too, in Greek had originally nothing to do with false reasoning at all. It simply meant a paid teacher; and whatever deprecatory sense it carried was connected not with the teaching, but with the payment.¹ The Greeks thought that to make young men wiser and more virtuous by talking to them — if indeed, it was possible at all, a proposition which many doubted — it ought to be a labour of love, and as such its own reward. Moreover, the high fees taken by the sophists could only be paid by youths of fortune and family who were not unreasonably suspected of wishing to make themselves supreme in the state. Thus, their object in spending large sums of money on the acquisition of rhetorical skill was in reality no less than the overthrow of democratic government, and "this to an Athenian meant the total subversion of justice, so among other nefarious secrets the sophists had to teach them that wrong was right, and how to make others believe the same."²

It is surprising that some people accused Socrates (469-399 B.C.) of being a member of the sophists³, although we know for certain that he revolted against sophists, denying their very famous dicta that

1. A.W. Benn, History of Ancient Philosophy, p. 38.

2. Ibid., p. 39.

3. See for example, Aristophanes, The Clouds, or The School for Sophists.

"justice is the interest of the stronger", and "might is right".¹

This mistake occurs in Islamic sources as well: "They asked Socrates the philosopher — who was an orator too — what is the task of the orator? 'It is to make small things big, and the big small,' he replied."²

In Iran, however, there was no oratory in the sense it is used today. The only forum for oratory was the mosque, its practitioners were the preachers. They could preach truth or fallacy according to circumstances. During the long history of preaching in Islamic areas, one can find very few honest and realistic preachers. This is accounted for by the fact that these areas were ruled mostly by despots and corrupt rulers or caliphs, and the preachers had either to preach according to their wishes, or face the prospect of exile, imprisonment or death for their honesty and independence. Those preachers who were well-paid, like the sophists of whom we spoke above, were the ruler's own preachers (wu'āz al-salāṭīn).³ They were careerists, and preached what the kings and the nobles wished, supporting their arguments with Koranic verses and Traditions, the better to exploit the masses. Furthermore, they had a unique opportunity to convey to the people their own unrealistic and even fanatical beliefs as the revealed truth. This was the case in almost every period of Islamic, and in particular Iranian, history, but in the time about which we are speaking, i.e. the

1. T.D. Weldon, The Vocabulary of Politics, p. 36; Plato, Gorgias, pp. 106-128.

2. Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī, al-Baṣā'ir wal-Dhakhā'ir, p. 93:

"قِيلَ لِسُفْرَاطِيْسِ الْفِيلَسُوفِ - وَكَانَ مِنْ حُطَّائِهِمْ - مَا صَنَاعَةُ الْخَطِيبِ؟ قَالَ:
أَنْ يُعْظِمَ شَأْنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ الصَّغِيرَةِ وَيُصَغِّرَ شَأْنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ الْعَظِيمَةِ."

3. For a comprehensive and historical discussion on this subject, see Ali Wardī's work under the same name, i.e. Wu'āz al-Salāṭīn (Baghdād, 1955).

seventh and eighth centuries, the situation had worsened, because of the general corruption of the people to such an extent that spiritual and secular leaders were collaborating with each other to exploit the people. The preachers, for their part, instead of seeking the approval of God, were seeking the affection of the ruling classes. Ḥāfiẓ has expressed his sharp criticism of the preachers who parade their piety at the mīkrāb and the pulpit, but in private they act basely.¹ Again, he has compared his affection for his beloved with the preacher's for the king and the police officer:

Just as the city preacher has chosen muhtasib and king, to love
Can I not take my sweetheart as my true darling, to love? 2

But 'Ubaid's artistry in this field is second to none. Through his vigorous satire and striking wit he displays all aspects of their impiety, rigidity and unrealistic approach. He defines the preacher as a "person who says but does not act", the orator as an "ass", the reciter as the "ass' anus".³ He advises bachelors "not to marry an orator's daughter, so that she should not produce an ass' foal."⁴ 'Ubaid states that in any society in which such preachers possess authority, they display God's easy and tolerant religion so rigidly and intolerably that the souls of clear-sighted people become annoyed. It is not for nothing in such a corrupt age the satirist should narrate

1. Diwān, p. 135:

«دعوتان کاین جلوہ در محراب و منبری کنند
چون بخلوت می روند آن کار دگر می کنند...
نیکوئی دارم ز دانشند مجلس باز نرسد
توبه فرمایان چرا سود توبه کمتر می کنند»

2. Ibid., p. 155:

«ایضا ستر جو نیز ملک دشمنه گزید
من اگر در این کار بگزینم چه سود؟

3. Ta'rifāt, p. 158.

4. Ṣad Pand, p. 53:

«دختر خطیب در کفاح میا ورید تا ناگاه کره خر نژاید»

the following anecdote: "They asked a preacher, 'What is the meaning of Islam?' 'I am a preacher, what have I got to do with Islam?' replied the preacher."¹ Sometimes their comments on religious matters were so irrational that even the common and credulous people could wittily make fun of them: "A preacher was saying from the pulpit, 'Whenever a person dies drunk and is buried drunk, he will also rise from his grave drunk.' A Khurāsānī sitting in the congregation was heard to say: 'By God, I would give one hundred dīnārs for a glass of such a wine.'"² The following anecdotes suggest some other aspects of this satirist's reaction against the dishonest preachers, at the same time would reveal the fact that some fault lies with the people and their ignorance, and also discovers the preachers' improvisation and clever dealing with common men:

A person asked a preacher, "What is the name of Iblīs' wife?" Calling him nearer, the preacher whispered, "O cuckold! how should I know her name?" When the man returned to the congregation, they asked him what the Mawlānā had said. "Everybody who is interested must ask Mawlānā personally," the man replied. 3

A preacher was saying from his pulpit, "If anybody writes the names of Adam and Eve and hangs it on the wall of his house, Satan will be prevented from entering his house." Talkhak rose from beneath the pulpit and said, "Satan came near them and deceived them in God's presence; how can he be prevented from entering our house because of their names?" 4

A preacher had a stick in his hand when he was in the pulpit. "Why did you not take a sword?" they asked him. "I have no need of a sword to deal with a mob such as this. If they make a mistake I would shatter their brains with this stick," replied the preacher. 5

1. Risāla-i Dilgushā, p. 190:

خطیبی را پرسیدند: 'مسلمانی چیست؟' گفت: 'من مردی خطیبم مرا با مسلمان چه کاری؟'

2. Ibid., p. 138.

3. Ibid., p. 124.

4. Ibid., p. 144.

5. Ibid., p. 131.

Even in his lyrics, 'Ubaid is obsessed with the preachers and their double-dealing. Thus, he pretends insanity to get rid of the wise preacher:

The preacher bores and troubles me, my attention to attract
I therefore play the insane his presence to repulse. 1

Rind, Sufi

'Ubaid disapproves of the sufis (mystics) but admires the rinds (libertines). Sufism has been defined in many forms, but we however have no need to be involved in details. It suffices to accept one of the moderate and ethical definitions approved by almost all sufis, namely that "Sufism is to abandon all in your head (of ambition and intellectual arrogance), to be generous with what you possess, and not to be provoked by what meets you of other people's harsh words and boring acts."² Again, they called sufi a person who constantly tries to possess praiseworthy morals and throws away all indecent habits.³ In other words, to be and to act in regard to humanitarianism both were the essence and the summary of sufism. But this ideal, too, as a result of the corruption of the age in which 'Ubaid lived, had become a mere relic, and what is perhaps more, an imposture which served as a means of exploitation of the rank and file. This happened particularly after the Mongols' attacks on Iran at the beginning of the thirteenth century A.D. in which our moral, economic and above all cultural and psychological

1. Kulliyāt, p. 45:

در دیرمی دهد این واعظ دمی پندارد
چاره آنست که دیوانگی پیش آرم
کالتفاتت بدان بهود. اف نه مرا
تا فراموش کند داعظ فرزانه مرا

2. Muhammad b. Munawwar, Asrār al-Tawhīd, pp. 14-15:

«صوفی آنست که آنچه در سرداری بستی، و آنچه در کف داری بدهی، و آنچه بر تو آید نجی.»

3. Qushairi, al-Risāla, p. 39:

«التَّصَوُّفُ: الدُّخُولُ فِي كُلِّ خُلُقٍ سَنِيٍّ وَالْخُرُوجُ مِنْ كُلِّ خُلُقٍ دَنِيٍّ.»

legacy suffered, and to some extent changed completely, while at the same time a spirit of retirement and introspection prevailed. No doubt that there were honest mystics, but there were also the dishonest who exploited mysticism to obtain access to the sultan, the ministers and the noble. Thus, eating the best, dressing expensively and acquiring a following (murīds) became the mark of the new sufism. Sufis withdrew from manual work which once was the sole means of livelihood of great mystics such as Ibrāhīm b. Adham of Balkh (d. 166/783)¹, and avoidance of meeting the upper classes which was the motto of mystics like Abū Yazīd of Bisṭām (d. 261/875), Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/777) and others, was abandoned. This situation, as bad as it was, only worsened at the beginning of the eighth Islamic century.

In such an atmosphere, people who were honest and well-educated, but could not adopt themselves to the circumstances, suffered more than the ordinary people. Ḥāfiẓ was one of the critics of this period. It is recorded that ‘Imād al-Dīn Faqīh of Kirman (d. 753/1352), who was a Sufi, stood high in the favour of Shāh Shujā’ the Muẓaffarid, with whom Ḥāfiẓ, by contrast, was persona non grata. ‘Imād, who, as his title faqīh indicates, was a jurist and theologian, had a tame cat which he had taught to go through the appropriate postures and genuflexions as if in performing prayers, and this art of mimicry was regarded by the Shāh as miraculous (karāmat), but by Ḥāfiẓ as a piece of hypocritical cunning. Thus, he wrote, without mentioning ‘Imād’s name:

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1. Kutubī, Fawāt al-Wafayāt, vol. I, pp. 4-5.
 2. Amīn, Ahmad, Duḥā al-Islām, vol. I, p. 167.

O gracefully walking partridge, where do you go? Stop!
Be not deceived because the zealot's cat performs his prayers!

In another poem, he likens the sufi to an animal who grazes the fresh grass, and he wishes that its tail should be longer, for he was eating unlawful food.¹

Again, however, 'Ubaid's vigorous satire is another matter. He exploits the potentiality of the words to display the real situation of the age, and the dishonesty of this group, that is the sufis. The sufi, he writes, "is a parasite whose disciples and followers are impostors and double-dealers. What he says about knowledge of self and God is nonsense."² In another place he defines sufi as "brigand", and goes on to postulate that ill-humoured sufi is "less than a dog", and that compound ignorance is "two sufis in one place."³

In the Risāla-i Dilgushā, he discloses his innermost thoughts on the subject: "They said to a sufi, 'You should sell your sufi cloak.' 'But when a hunter sells his net, by what means can he hunt?' replied the sufi."⁴ He prefers the bear to the sufi in the following anecdote:

A man went to his garden, wherein he saw a bear and a mystic. He beat the mystic and left the bear. "O Believer! am I less than this bear that you beat me and not it?" "Yes, because the poor bear eats and defecates here, but you eat here and defecate somewhere else," replied the man. 5

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1. Khwāndamīr, Ḥabīb al-Siyar, III, p. 315; Browne, A Literary History of Persia, III, p. 258. Some authors have doubted the authenticity of this event. See Ṣafā', A History of Iranian Literature, III, part 2, pp. 986-87. See also Ḥāfiẓ, Dīwān, pp. 90-91:

بنیاد مکر با فلک حقه باز کرد...
غره آشوب گر به عابد ناز کرد

"صوفی نهاد دام و سر حقه باز کرد
ای کبت نوش خرام کجا مردی بایست

2. Ta'rifāt, p. 159.

3. Ibid., pp. 159-160.

4. Risāla-i Dilgushā, p. 98:

قَبْلِ لِبَعْضِ الصُّوفِيَّةِ : بَعْضُ جُبَّتِكَ . قَالَ : إِذَا بَاعَ الصَّيَادُ شَبَكَتَهُ فَبِأَيِّ شَيْءٍ يُصِيدُ؟

5. Ibid., p. 140.

Again, there are indications in his lyrics which sharply criticize their unscrupulousness and lack of both intellect and knowledge:

Alas! for these grey-clothed sufis
Those who have no intellect and no knowledge
To hunt, they crouch on their knees
Watching like the cunning and silent cat ... 1

If 'Ubaid disapproves of the pretentious sufis, he on the contrary has praised the honest sufis which are regarded as 'ārif (gnostic) or rind (libertine) with great admiration as his contemporary Ḥāfiẓ did. This word, and to some extent, words like qalandar (inattentive), mujarrad (disengaged) and lā ubālī (unconcerned) and the like are words that Persian poets normally have used as the opposite to the fanatics in general and of sufis and mutasawwifs in particular. This tradition in which a distinction is drawn between sufī and rind presumably began with Sanā'ī (535/1140), Anwarī (585/1189), Aṭṭār (629/1230), Fakhr al-Dīn 'Irāqī (688/1289), Jalāl al-Dīn Rumī (672/1273) and reached its maturity in Ḥāfiẓ (791/1390) and finally in our author.

It is difficult, however, to give a clear-cut definition of both rind and rindī. Although these great poets have used the word almost enthusiastically, none of them have given us an explicit account of it. A Western scholar has defined rindī as "unreason" or "the doctrine of unreason"². He continues to say that "the events teach him [Ḥāfiẓ] that it was impossible to believe in a rational universe, and lead him to a pessimistic estimation of the individual purpose in life, an estimation which for that very reason is hedonistic only in appearance."³

1. Kulliyāt, p. 45:

که ندارند عقل و دانش و هوش
مترصد چو گربه خاموش
آه از این صوفیان آرزو قیوس
لاپی صید در کیش زانو

2. A.J. Arberry, lists of the poets quoted or imitated by Ḥāfiẓ, CLP, p. 352.

3. Ibid., p. 352. See also A.J. Arberry, Fifty Poems of Ḥāfiẓ, pp. 31-32.

There are few other definitions in Persian sources, most of which are personal and less objective.¹ These should be, to some extent, comparable to previous definition. One may postulate that rindi (libertinism) in its strict meaning, at least in the period of which we are speaking (i.e. the eighth century), was the characteristic of those thinkers and poets who were not overly zealous in maintaining fixed religious or political beliefs over a long period of time; in other words, libertinism should be characterized as the freedom of paying no attention to the ordinary and in particular hypocritical opinions of religious men, sufis and sham theologians. It appears, too, that the real condition of being a libertine in the view of this group was that "a person should have examined all extant ideas and views, and having accepted some for a while, later on freed himself from them all by virtue of profound contemplation."²

It is, nevertheless, worth noting here that libertinism is neither negativism nor nihilism, because while the libertine supposes a given belief genuine, his spiritual and practical moods are appropriate to it; while on the contrary, the position of the negativist or nihilist is always alike, and confined to negativism or nihilism. Since these two deny everything unconditionally, they are extreme sceptics.

It is almost accepted that the real hero of this field with no reservations is Ḥāfiz, and because of this, they have called him in regard to his own poems "the leader of all the libertines".³ But, however, it may be maintained that 'Ubaid does not suffer in comparison

1. Hūman, Maḥmūd, Ḥāfiz, pp. 264-65.

2. Hūman, Maḥmūd, Ḥāfiz Chi migūyad, p. 17.

3. Dīwān, p. 148:

در خرقه پو آتش زری ای عارف سالک جدی گن در سرحلقه زندان جهان باش

with Ḥāfiẓ; furthermore, he has the advantage of being Ḥāfiẓ's own forerunner, because as A.J. Arberry has justly said, "Ḥāfiẓ's 'doctrine of unreason' is to be found already fully developed in Zākānī, likewise his carpe diem, and evidently also his satirical innuendoes."¹

Let us now examine what 'Ubaid has said on the subject of libertines and libertinism. He begins simply:

Give my regards to the light-natured, sociable, liberal and easy going people ... appeal to the noble-minded libertines, so that you should be saved, ... help the drunkards, ... think of deliverance ... and release yourself from seeking fame and reputation and follow an easy life. 2

In his panegyrics, too, 'Ubaid often points to the sufi and his habit of subtle imposture in the mosques, while he openly praises libertinism along side wine-drinking and pursuit of the beloved. Again he writes:

Qalandars are we, hypocrisy and antics, not our wont,
To trick, deceive and cheat. 3

O God! bestow on us purity, grant us indigents a pittance
We are the watch-dogs of the broad-minded libertine's camp,
give us dwelling in that camp. 4

Finally it must be noted that 'Ubaid was so fond of libertines and libertinism that the entire characters of his witty and at the same time critical anecdotes have been presented as libertines. He regards great men of learning of his age and previous centuries as real libertines. People like Quṭb al-Dīn Shirazī, 'Aḍud al-Dīn Ijī, Majd Hamgar and others were praised as easy-going libertines rather than philosophers, physicians and poets.

1. List of the Poets quoted or imitated by Ḥāfiẓ, CPL, p. 352.

2. Sad Pand, p. 25 of Kulliyāt.

3. Kulliyāt, p. 65:

چون ما قلندرانیم در مار یا نباشد تزدیر و زرق و سانس آیین ما نباشد

4. Ibid., p. 72:

با بنیایان نوایی بده ...
در آن کوچه مارا سراسری بده

خدایا تو مارا صفایی بده
سگ کوی زندان آزاده ام

Part II. Political

There is a substantial connection between satire and politics in the widest sense: satire is not only the commonest form of political literature, but in so far as it tries to influence public behaviour, it is the most political genre of literature. Both are felt to be discreditable: the word "politician" has an unfavourable sense, and satirists usually apologize for their own wicked tongues. But both are necessary, since all social and legal systems are in need of continuous reform, and politics is the only means of achieving it, while only satire is powerful enough to break down the attitudes of mind which hinder change. Most of the great satirists, therefore, have in fact been deeply interested in politics, and most have been against the establishment of their countries; examples of them have been given already, including Juvenal, Menippus, Erasmus (d. 1536), Voltaire, Montesquieu, Swift in the West and Jāhiz, Ibn Qutaiba, Ṣāhib, Tawhīdī, Sanā'ī, Ḥāfiẓ and 'Ubaid in the East. The enemies of satire are tyranny and provincialism or narrow-mindedness, two factors which are complementary. For tyrants in general dislike any form of criticism, perhaps because they never know where it will lead; and in provincial life, free criticism is felt to be subversive of good order and decency.

Now, an example of this attitude is found in Iran, which has suffered from both tyranny and provincialism throughout its history, and these two enemies have lived side by side. Tyranny was, and still is, practiced by the rulers, kings and statesmen on the one hand, and

provincialism is still fostered by the clergy on the other.¹ But as it is impossible here to trace the development of political satire through the whole of Persian history, we will confine ourselves to the eighth/fourteenth century.

Since in this period the basis of government was tyranny and despotism, and because the durability of despotism depends on "fear"², dicta such as Thomas Jefferson's "that government is best which governs least"³, or H.D. Thoreau's "that government is best which governs not at all"⁴, never found support in Persia — nor indeed anywhere else. We read in the definition of politics that "it is the participation of the people — directly or indirectly — in the affairs of the state, its guidance, determination of the forms, aims and the content of the activity of the state."⁵ These ideals and other democratic wishes have never succeeded in Iran. People suffered from the oppression and strict control of the sovereigns which in its turn resulted in "fear".

1. Persian literature is often antagonistic towards both secular and spiritual tyranny. The latter has been in particular the focus point of Persian mystics and philosophers, because they could not tolerate the rigid and unrealistic approach of Semitic religions. If an observer looks at any diwān of a celebrated Persian poet or mystic, he would certainly find sharp criticism in the form of satire, irony, mockery, parody, invective, derision and the like, here and there, concerning Semitic rigidity.
2. The view that the continuity of despotism rests on "fear" was first expressed by Ch. Montesquieu (1689-1755), the French writer whose Persian Letters (1721) satirized contemporary social and political institutions in France. In his probably greatest work, The Spirit of the Laws (1748), he discusses the above subject at length. "As virtue is necessary in a republic," he writes, "and in a monarchy honour, so fear is necessary in a despotic government ... Persons capable of setting a value upon themselves would be likely to create disturbances. Fear must therefore depress their spirits, and extinguish even the least sense of ambition." (See the English translation by J.V. Pritchard, London, 1878, vol. I, pp. 28-29).
3. Maurice Latey, Tyranny (Penguin Books, London, 1972), p. 131.
4. Mosse, G.L., The Culture of Western Europe (Murray, 1963), p. 103.
5. This definition can be found in various political books, probably in different terms; the above definition is quoted from Lipset, S., Political Man (Heinemann, 1963), pp. 21-22.

Despotism kills the spirit of free thinking and frankness, and the obvious product of such a political atmosphere is hypocrisy and flattery. Thus, the more a person flattered and lied, the higher he stood in the esteem of the king and his courtiers. This century was one of the most corrupt periods in Persian history, as stated in Chapter IV. 'Ubaid claimed that in such a period and under such government, to be able to live or to obtain a mouthful, one had "to exercise mockery, or pander, or play the tambourine, or bear false witness and sell one's religion for the pleasures of this world or to be guilty of ingratitude."¹ Accordingly, in this age, "do not search for a just governor, an honest chamberlain or a wealthy man with a pure anus."² In such a state, "the trustee of endowments is a corrupt, the chancellor is a thief, the state accountant is a thief's accomplice."³ Every soldier is "a ravenous wolf", the commander-in-chief is a "pilferer of supplies." The chief of police "sits on the fence and robs by night only to claim the reward next day", and the clerk of the court is an "informer". As the king's word governs all affairs, he is the only man deemed absolute in speech."⁴ Again the vizier is accursed while the paymaster "is bitter towards all". The office holder is universally envied and hated." The officer is a sword-carrying thief, and finally headmanship is the nursery of aggression and violence."⁵

1. Sad Pand, pp. 52-53: «مستخرگ و قوادی دد ف زنی و نغازی و گواهی بدروغ دادن و دین بدینا فروختن و کفران نعمت پیشه سازند تا پیش بزرگان عصر عزیز باشند و از عمر برهوز دار گردید.»

2. Ta'rifāt-i Mullā du Plaza, pp. 163-64.

3. Ibid., p. 165.

4. Ibid., p. 168.

5. Ibid., p. 168:

«اللہ خدایی: تدارکت رخ زنی و ث خداری»

'Ubaid, once more gives us a clear picture of their mismanagement of political affairs. After describing the ancient views on morals and politics, which are those of Aristotle and the Muslim philosophers, the writer passes to the accepted views of the nobles:

When the great and wise men of subtle understanding, with whose honoured persons the face of the earth is now adorned, reflected on the perfecting of the human soul and its future destiny, and examined the practices and the opinions of the famous men of the former time, they soon formulated a complete and categorical denial of all these beliefs. They say, "It has been revealed to us that the Rational Soul (Rūh-i nāṭiqā) is a thing of no consideration; that its continuance absolutely depends on the continuance of the body." They further say, "What is asserted by the prophets as to its having perfections and defects, and as to its subsisting and continuing in itself after its separation from the body is impossible, as is also the resurrection ... What is intended by the joys of Paradise and the torments of Hell must be in this as the poet says:

He to whom they gave, receives his gift even here,
And he who has nothing here is put off with promises
for tomorrow."

Consequently our leaders of thought are entirely unconcerned with such matters as the Resurrection, Future Punishment, nearness to, or remoteness from God, the Divine approval or wrath, perfection and imperfection and the like; and the result of this conviction is that they spend every day of their life in satisfying their lust and pursuing their pleasure ... Besides, they commonly inscribe this quatrain on their fathers' tomb-stones:

No mansions lie beyond this earth and sea
No reason dwells outside of me and thee
That nothing which is deemed by some men all,
O pass it by; 'tis but vain phantasy.

And it is for this reason that in their eyes attacks on men's lives, property and honour seem insignificant and of small account:

To such, one draught of wine in hue like fire
Outweighs the blood of brethren or of sire.

In truth our applause is the just need of these our great and favoured guides to whom matters which,

notwithstanding the cultivation of the reasoning powers, remained hidden for several thousand years and now have been made plain without trouble. 1

Now, the outcome of such convictions about God, the Future Life and the like is clear. 'Ubaid as all other political satirists is very much concerned with justice, which he considers correctly to be the root of all social reforms, public welfare and security. "The great scholars of the ancients," he writes,

have regarded justice one of the four cardinal virtues of humanity ..., but in the view of our teachers this quality is the worst of all, and hold that justice involves much loss, a thesis which they have proven by the clearest arguments. For, they say, "The foundation of sovereignty, lordship and mastery is punishment, since men will obey no one until they fear him (2); if all feel themselves equals, the foundations of administration will be undermined, and the order of public business disorganized. He who practices the principles of justice (God forbid!) refrains from beating, killing and fining alleged criminals, and does not intoxicate himself or quarrel with his subordinates, but none will fear him. Then the people will not obey their kings, nor sons their sires, nor servants their masters, while the affairs of the lands and the people will lapse into chaos. Hence they say:

"Kings to gain a single object oft will slay a hundred souls" (3), "And they further say, "Justice bequeaths disaster." (4)

What proof indeed, can be more convincing than this, that so long as the Kings of Persia played the tyrant, like Dahhāk, the Arabian, and Yazdigird "the sinner" (who now confer distinction on the chief seats of Hell together with other later potentates who followed them), their Empire increased and their realm flourished; but.

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1. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, pp. 13-14. Here Browne's translation has been reproduced, see Literary History of Persia, vol. III, pp. 247-49.
 2. Cf. what has already been quoted from Montesquieu on the matter on p. 219 of this chapter.
 3. « پادشاهان از پی یک مصلحت صد خون گنند. »
 4. « الْعَدَالَةُ تُورِثُ الْفَلَاحَ. »

when the reign of Khusraw Anusharwān came, who by reason of his weak judgement and the policy of his false ministers, chose the attribute of justice, in a little while the pinnacles of his palace fell to the ground, the Fire Temples, which were their places of worship, were extinguished and all traces of them disappeared from the face of the earth. The "Prince of Believers" and Confirmer of the laws of religion 'Umar b. Khaṭṭab ..., who was noted for his justice, made bricks and ate barley-bread, while his cloak, as they relate, weighed seventeen maunds. (1) Mu'āwiya, by the blessing of injustice, wrested the kingdom from the hands of Imām 'Alī ..., Nebuchadnezzar, did not establish his authority, nor become eminent in both worlds, nor did his empire increase, until he slew twelve thousand innocent prophets in the Holy City and cast into bondage many thousand more. 2

From the above quotations one can understand that what he states under the name of adopted or accepted ethics, is the policy of the ruling classes of his age, and he apparently endorses it. But there is no doubt that the actual case is the reverse. He satirizes them by way of mockery and a hidden indignation. Here what he said is quite comparable to Machiavelli's satirical advice to Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino, almost two centuries later: "It is not necessary for a prince to have all the good qualities I have enumerated, but it is very necessary that he should appear to have them."³ He goes on to say, "The first way to lose your state is to neglect the art of war; the first way to win a state is to be skilled in the art of war", and, "A prince ought to have no other aim or thought, nor select anything for his study than

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1. Rāghib Isfahānī, who was 'Ubaid's main source of satire and witticism, relates that, "Once while 'Umar was preaching they saw a shirt on him which had twelve patches." Again, he writes: "He had a shirt whose price was only four dirhams."

« وَعُمَرُ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - رُؤِيَ عَلَيْهِ قَمِيصٌ فِيهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ رُقْعَةً وَهُوَ يَخْطُبُ »، « وَكَانَ لِعُمَرَ قَمِيصٌ قِيَمَتُهُ أَرْبَعَةُ دَرَاهِمٍ »

See Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 366.

2. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, pp. 22-23; E.G. Browne, A Literary History of Persia, vol. III, p. 250.
3. The Prince, p. 18.

war and its rules." He again states, "a prince should not worry if he incurs reproach for cruelty so long as he keeps his subjects united and loyal."¹ He gives examples like 'Ubaid, about harm and defects which result from justice, generosity and keeping words. "Contemporary examples," he writes, "show that princes who have achieved great things have been those who have given their words lightly, who have known how to trick men with their cunning, and who in the end overcome those abiding by honest principles."² Again he states,

If a prince wants to maintain his rule, he must learn how not to be virtuous, for the fact is that a man who wants to act virtuously in every way necessarily comes to grief ..., so a prince should learn from the fox and the lion; because a lion is defenceless against traps and a fox is defenceless against wolves. Therefore one must be a fox in order to recognize traps, and a lion to frighten off wolves. 3

To illustrate his aim, Machiavelli gives an objective example for the Duke, saying,

A certain contemporary ruler, whom it is better not to name, never preaches anything except peace and good faith; and he is an enemy of both one and the other, and if he had ever honoured either of them he would have lost either his standing or his state many times over. 4

'Ubaid, in the same manner, condemns virtue, and gives us an historical example. "Changiz Khān," he writes, "who today, despite his enemies, stands supreme in the lower depths of Hell as the exemplar and guide of all the Mongols, ancient and modern, did not attain to the

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1. Ibid., p. 21.
 2. Ibid., pp. 90-91.
 3. Ibid., p. 99.
 4. Ibid., pp. 101-102.

sovereignty of the whole world until with ruthless sword he had destroyed millions of innocent persons."¹ Again he relates that

It is recorded in the histories of the Mongols that when Baghdād was conquered by Hulāgu Khān, he ordered the remnants of the inhabitants who had escaped the sword, to be brought before him. He then enquired into the circumstances of each class, and when he was acquainted with them, he said, "Artisans are indispensable"; and gave them permission to go about their business. To the merchants he commanded that some capital should be given, so that they might trade for him. From the Jews he was content to take a poll-tax, declaring them to be an oppressed people; while the effeminate he consigned to his gynoeceia. He then set apart the judges, shaikhs, sūfīs, hājīs, preachers, persons of note, beggars, religious mendicants, wrestlers, poets and story-tellers, saying, "These are superfluous creatures and waste God's blessings", and ordered all of them to be drowned in the Tigris, thus purifying the face of the earth from their vile existence. As a natural consequence, sovereignty continued in his family for nearly ninety years, during which time their empire daily increased; until poor Abū Sa'id (2) conceived in his mind a sentimental passion for justice, and branded himself with the stigma of his quality, and his Empire shortly came to an end, and the house of Hulāgu Khān and all his endeavours were brought to naught through the aspiration of Abū Sa'id ... Blessings rest on those great and well-directed persons who guided mankind out of the darkness and absurd delusion of justice into the light of right guidance.

Yes, when a man confuse his mind
He does those things which make no point. 3

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One of the false aspects of the policy of kings was their useless and harmful fighting of wars for no reason other than satisfaction of

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1. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, pp. 22-23.
 2. Abū Sa'id (d. 736/1335), the last powerful sovereign of the Ilkhanid dynasty who was crowned in 1317, being under thirteen years of age. He had considerable successes during his reign and described by the historians of the period as "brave and brilliant prince of splendid appearance, a poet, a calligrapher, generous and witty." 'Ubaid's praise is therefore not for nothing. He died at Qarābāgh in 736/1335 ('Abbās Iqbāl, Tārīkh-i Mogol, pp. 345-346).
 3. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, p. 23.

their megalomania. So 'Ubaid in a few anecdotes criticizes this habit by his bantering satire. "They said," he writes, "to a soldier, 'Why do you not come out to fight against infidels?' 'I swear by God that I do not know any of them and none of them know me; therefore how can enmity occur between me and them?' replied the soldier."¹ In another place, he puts the whole responsibility of wars and catastrophes on the shoulders of the ruling class. He states wisely that the waywardness of this class always causes irrevocable harm to people.

Sultān Maḥmūd asked Ṭalkhak, "How does war occur between people?" "O Sultān! You should not see and eat [such dirt!]" replied Ṭalkhak. "O rascal! What do you mean by talking such rubbish?" asked the Sultān. "Yes, it occurs in the very same manner. For a person ... eats dirt, that is talks rubbish, and the other answers back, and the result is fighting," replied the witty man. 2

There is a great similarity between what is quoted from 'Ubaid and in the following piece of superb satire by Voltaire:

A genealogist proves to a prince that he is the direct descendant of a count whose relatives had made a family pact three or four hundred years ago with a house whose very name has left no memory. This house had remote pretensions to a province whose last owner had just died of apoplexy. The prince and his council conclude without difficulty that the province belongs to him by divine right. This province which is some hundreds of leagues distant, protests in vain that it does not know him, that it has no wish to be governed by him, that one must at least have a people's consent before legislating for it. These discourses do not even reach the ears of the prince

1. Risala-i Dilgushā, p. 90. See also Jāhiz, al-Bayān, vol. III, p. 233:

« قِيلَ لِيَجُنْدِيٍّ لَمْ لَا تَخْرُجْ إِلَى الْغَزْوِ؟ » فَقَالَ « وَاللَّهِ لَا أَعْرِفُهُمْ أَحَدًا وَلَا يَعْرِفُونَنِي، فَمِنْ أَيْنَ وَقَعَتِ الْعِدَاوَةُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ؟ »

2. Ibid., p. 134:

سلطان محمود از ظلمت پرسید که جنگ در میان مردم چگونه واقع می شود. گفت: نه بینی و نخوژی! گفت: مرگت چه که می خوژی! گفت: چنین باشد، یکی گئی خورد و آن دیگری جواب دهد، جنگ میان ایشان واقع شود.

whose rights are incontestable. He immediately finds a great number of men who have nothing to do nor to lose. He dresses them in heavy blue cloth at 110 sous the ell, puts a heavy white cord round their hats, makes them turn right and left, and marches to glory. The other princes who hear of this escapade take part in it, each according to his means, and occupy a small piece of land with more mercenary murderers than Changis Khan, Tamerlane, Bajazet every dragged in their train. 1

At any rate, 'Ubaid had reached this conclusion by observing the real events of his age. The Muzaffarids in Kirman, Injūs in Shiraz, Jalayerids in Iraq and Āzarbaijān, each had their own kingdoms, but one of them was continually attacking the other under the pretext of violation of some treaty by the other side, but in reality to develop his own domain of sovereignty, gaining a certain slave-girl, even a handsome boy and so on; and the other side did the same in turn. The result was a fierce fighting, deprivation of the people, the destruction of hundreds of houses, the plunder of villages and the rape of thousands of wives and virgins. Because from 'Ubaid's point of view even the layman rejects killing people whom he does not know. "A Qazwini," he writes, "was going to fight heretics with a bow without an arrow in the hope that the enemy will shoot the arrow and he will get it and shoot it back. 'Perhaps they will shoot no arrow,' they asked him. 'In that case, there will be no war,' replied the Qazwini."²

No doubt 'Ubaid was not able to choose his heroes from contemporary people, because of the political atmosphere. So he goes back to

1. Philosophical Dictionary, p. 232.

2. Risāla-i Dilgushā, p. 107:

”قزوینی با کمان بی تیر بجنگ ملاحظه می رفت که تیر از جانب دشمن آید [و او ببردارد] گفتند: تیر نیاید.
گفت: آه وقت جنگ باشد.”

This is the only anecdote in 'Ubaid's Kulliyāt wherein a certain cleverness is attributed to Qazwinis.

previous times and chooses similar characters who were as ruthless, wayward, hypocritical and arrogant as the rulers of his own age. He does so, perhaps to show the veracity of the celebrated maxim that "the heroes of one generation usually seem vulgar charlatans to the next". For, however, these personalities have been praised by the poet-laureates and historiographers in their own time, the future generation discovers the poet's white lies and the historiographer's exaggerations and sheer flatteries. In this way, Talkhak, the jester of Sultan Mahmūd of Ghazna, was one of his favourite personalities. He puts his own critical satire in the mouth of Talkhak when he satirizes contemporary kings and rulers such as Mubārīz al-Dīn.

Once Talkhak's wife produced a child. Sultān Mahmūd asked him whether it was a son or a daughter. "What comes from poor people except a son or a daughter?" replied Talkhak. "O rascal! What else comes from the nobles?" asked Mahmūd. "Oh! An evil-doer, an unsociable person, a ruthless oppressor and a house-destroyer," replied the wit. 1

Finally, to summarize 'Ubaid standpoint on politics, we should turn again to his invaluable treatise, The Definitions, in which he gives more descriptions of statesmen and their policy in running the nation, and their ill-treatment of the people. The source of the aristocracy, he writes, is "boasting and immodesty", their existence is "naught", their humility is "meaningless", their words are "bragging and stupidity", their morals are "meanness, greed, jealousy and cupidity." The fool is "he who expects their generosity." The man who is their

1. Ibid, p. 132:

"زنِ طغاک فرزندی زاید. سلطان محمود اور ابرسید کہ چه زاده است... گفت 'از درویشان چه زاید بخزیری یا دغتری؟' گفت... مگر از بزرگان چه زاید؟' گفت 'ای خداوند بخیری زاید بدکار سمگاری خانه برانداز'."

attendant is an "unfortunate and wretched person." Therefore, in the reign of such nobles, "justice and fairness are as rare as the phoenix", for their habits are "tricks, telling lies, hypocrisy, discord and false promises."¹

Family — Women, Children

Throughout history, since men enjoy the advantages of physical strength, intellectual energy, political power and wealth, and until recently also those of legal status and education, it seems unnecessary as well as unchivalrous for them to have written as much satire on women as they have. One can say too that, as the faculty of writing has been chiefly a masculine endowment, the reproach of making the world miserable has been always thrown upon the shoulders of woman. The reality behind what men have written about women is an ambivalence of feeling, which includes deep antagonism. This reality has been elaborated and disguised by a variety of myths. In face, as Simone de Beauvoir reminds us, almost everything written about women is myth, and myth made by men.² Because, historically, the first step in formalizing such feelings about women into satire was apparently taken by the Greeks, and it is said that Semonides of Amorgas (7th century B.C.) wrote, "On the whole, the greatest evil that Zeus has sent to men is women. For whoever lives with a woman, never passes a whole day in happiness."³ But if the men, literature and law were unfair towards women, even the so-called heavenly sources have been the same.

1. Ta'rifāt, Chapter 5, p. 159.

2. The Second Sex. See especially Book One, Facts and Myths, pp. 35-171.

3. Hodgart, Matthew, Satire, p. 79.

In these books, we read on the one hand that sin came into the world through a woman, Eve, and ironically redemption became possible because a woman gave birth to the Saviour of mankind. Therefore, Eve-baiting became the sport of the Christian and even Muslim moralists.¹ The more devotion was paid to the sinless Mother of God, the more execration was heaped on Eve, who became the symbol of everything that was evil in women. Men's unfairness later reached the extent that we can observe in religious books whereas God created Eve from one of Adam's ribs, it must have been a crooked rib, from the left or unlucky side.²

One of the famous oriental anti-feminist stories is the Thousand and One Nights, in which a husband is so jealous that he carries his wife everywhere locked up in a box; nevertheless the wife manages to deceive him with other men.³ The same utterances on women may be easily found, frequently in Islamic areas. Although the situation of women in early Islamic era was better than the pre-Islamic one, because pre-Islamic Arabs buried their daughters alive⁴; but men still were more privileged and stronger in Islam⁵, and they are at present. In sexual terms, too, women are surpassed to a great extent. According

1. In Persian literature, normally, they put the guilt on Adam, but everybody knows that according to the religious books that it was Satan through Eve who tempted Adam.

2. Ibn Qutaiba, Uyūn al-Akhbār, vol. IV, pp. 77-78:

” قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِنَّمَا الْمَرْأَةُ خُلِقَتْ مِنْ ضَلَعٍ مَرْتَبَانٍ تَعْرِضُ عَلَى إِمَامَتِهَا تَكْثِيرُهَا فِدَائِيَهَا بِقِيَشٍ بِهَا ”

3. M. Hodgart, Satire, p. 120 ; see also, Tales from The Thousand and One Nights, pp. 106-112, in which a woman by virtue of her beauty manages to tempt and imprison the qādī, vizier, governor, king and the carpenter, and as the story reads, locks all the senior officers of a kingdom in a cupboard.

4. Koran 16:60-61:

” وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُمْ بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا ۖ وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ۚ يَتَوَارَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِن سُوءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِ أَيُنْسِلُهُ عَلَىٰ هُونٍ ۚ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُ فِي التُّرَابِ ... ”

5. Ibid., 4:38:

” الرَّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ ۚ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ... ”

to tradition they are weak intellectually: "Many men have become perfect, but of women only four: Mary, Fāṭima, Khadija and 'Āyisha. The imperfection of the women is not because of their appearance, but because of their qualities, and because of their defect in intellect and religion. They interpreted these defects as their abandonment of prayer and fasting during the menstruation days."¹

These documents therefore reflect the accepted view of women in Islamic society in a wider sense, and to a great extent in Persia. Now, turning to 'Ubaid, we observe that he too has inherited the opinions which were adopted by his predecessors. Studying 'Ubaid's writings, the reader can easily understand the superiority of men over women. Through his Definitions, and in his anecdotes, it is the man who complains, dominates and tells the truth; it is he who suffers hardship, indigence, bears the ruthlessness of judges, rulers and the wealthy. In other words, his system of family is a patriarchy. The father complains of his wife's infidelity, and of his children's disobedience.

We know little of 'Ubaid's own life, except that he was married, and had at least one child.² But we are sure that he was always in debt and usually was unable to provide for his family; although he once boasted that "Kings and nobles have respected and nourished him"³, but it seems that it was merely a poetical exaggeration, probably to attract the favours of the new patron. It is also recognisable from

1. Kalābādhi, al-Ta'rrūf, p. 53: "كُلُّ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ كَثِيرٌ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا أَرْبَعٌ: مَرْيَمُ وَفَاتِمَةُ وَخَدِيجَةُ وَعَائِشَةُ. وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لِنَفْسَانِ بِرَأْسِ الْبَرِّ مِنْ حَسَنَةِ أَعْيَانِهِمْ وَلَكِنْ مِنْ حَسَنَةِ الصِّفَةِ؛ وَصَفْوَتِهِنَّ أَيْضًا بِنَفْسَانِ الْعَقْلِ وَالْدِّينِ. وَفِيهِ نَفْسَانِ دِينِي بَرَكَيْنِ الصَّلَاةِ وَالصِّيَامِ فِي الْحَيْضِ"

2. See Chapter III, pp. 142-43.

3. Kulliyāt, p. 33:

مراهمی سلاطین عزیز داشته اند زابتدای صبی تا به این زمان داران

his writings that he was a hot-tempered and nervous man, that is to say, after being involved in the kinks and twists of poverty and the pressures of the age, he had thrown himself into libertinism, pleasure seeking and mockery. In short, even if he was not, clearly, against marriage and the rearing of children in principle, he himself was not happy with family life. 'Ubaid's view of women is marked by pessimism, the causes of which can be easily understood by the reader. "The world," he writes is "a place wherein no creature can enjoy peace. The wise man is he who does not concern himself with the world and its inhabitants."¹

In an unhappy world as this wherein there is no security for honest people and for men of learning in particular, "marriage is futile" and love is the occupation of the unscrupulous people. A bachelor is a man who laughs at the world's beard, the unfortunate is the householder. The two-horned (Dhul-qarnain) is a man who has two wives. The most unfortunate of the unfortunate is he who has more.² The cuckold is the father-in-law, and the shrew is the mother-in-law. Thus, in such conditions the wife and children are not intimates, and one's own son is a home-born foe.³ The ill-starred is a person who has a daughter.⁴ Brother is the enemy, and the relative is the

1. Ta'rifāt, p. 151.

2. Ibid., pp. 150-151, 161.

3. Ibid., p. 161.

4. Ibid., p. 161: «البد اختر: آنکه بد اختر گرفتار باشد»

It is worthy of mentioning that Firdawsī (416/1025) was prior to 'Ubaid in this conviction, when he said:

کسی را که در پرده دختر بود اگر پادشاه است بد اختر بود

See Muntakhab-i Shāhnāma, p. 151. Presumably 'Ubaid has inserted the "ill-starred" بد اختر in his Definitions from the above couplet. Many Persian writers and poets have regarded daughters as "God's lament" or curse, and disaster, or one's enemy. Of them the following two excerpts would suffice to support our discussion, first from Kalīla u Dimna (p. 287), which reads: "The men of

keen enemy; the man who is encumbered by a numerous family is a captive. A formally male is a person who acts according to women's views. The young man who has an old wife is miserable, and an old man who has a young wife is a cuckold.¹ The ram and horned is a person whose wife has read the story of Wis u Rāmīn, and for him joy after sorrow is absolute divorce.²

As a support of his witty definitions, 'Ubaid argues that certain words have undergone a semantic change so that in his own time a lady was "one who has many lovers", the house-wife "one who has few", the virtuous wife "is she who is satisfied with one lover."³ On the other hand, adultery is lawful copulation, and lawful copulation is a monotonous act; the brain of a donkey is the food that wives cook for their husbands. The virgin is a girl who has not yet been familiar with the pleasure of copulation, and virginity is a meaningless noun."⁴ 'Ubaid continues his coarse satire against women elsewhere: "Be not deceived by widows, in particular widows who already have children"; "Do not make your lawful pleasure unlawful for the sake of cold

intellect regard daughters as enemies, while they desire sons for the permanence of their names":

« د خردمندان، دختر را در موازنه خضمان دانند، و پسر را برای بقاء ذکر خواهند... »

The second is from Khāqānī, who has regarded the death of his daughter as a real finding and divine blessing (Diwān, p. 835):

سرفکند شدم بود دختر زاد بر فلک سرفرا ختم چو برفت
ما تم عمر دیشتم چو رسید غم نانی ثنا ختم چو برفت
مکتش نام خواستم کردن دولتش نام ختم چو برفت...

A fact behind this disliking was economic. Because a son could work in those days, while a daughter could not. Besides, a poor man such as Firdawsī or 'Ubaid had to provide a dowry as well.

1. Ta'rifāt, p. 161.

2. Ibid., p. 161: « الفرج والى حذار: انك زلت قصديس درامين خواند »

3. Ibid., p. 161.

4. Ibid., p. 162.

copulation"; "Beware of the exploitation of the wet-nurses and midwives, the predominance of the pregnant women, taking the responsibility of the woman and hearing the baby's cry"; "Do not marry, so as not to be a rascal"; Beat the head of the old women in order to gain the degree of the martyrs."; "Do not be deceived in the streets by the tallness of the stature of the women, and their veil and illuminated scarf, do not seek tranquillity, happiness and abundance in the house of a man who has two wives"; "Do not expect chastity from a woman who has read the story of Wīs and Rāmīn."¹

"Pity a young woman whose husband has travelled, and the young girl who has lost her virginity when her wedding night approaches; so then God pity you." "Copulate with the women in the agony of death as far as you can and make the most of it." "Do not trust the promise of the prostitutes ...", "Do not settle a catamite and a harlot in the same place." "Strike the women sharply! and when you do so copulate with them too severely, so they fear you and become obedient, and in consequence the affairs of the house become possible amidst fear and hope."²

But the striking satire on women and the family in 'Ubaid's writings can be found in his treatise Dilgushā. Some examples will be sufficient to support his assertion:

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1. Ṣad Pand, pp. 52-54. Wīs u Rāmīn is a fine mathnawī by Fakhr al-Dīn As'ad-i Gurgānī (d. 466/1073), and it has been regarded since its being composed as a symbol for the "loose morality". For there are many non-Islamic events in it which mostly come from pre-Islamic Iranian tradition and Zoroastrian ceremonies, including infidelity in love affairs and family system. See Minorsky, BSOAS (Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies), XI (4, 1947), XII (1, 1947) and XVI (1, 1954); introduction to Wīs u Rāmīn by M. Ja'far Mahjūb, pp. 31-44.
 2. Ṣad Pand, pp. 54-55.

They asked an Arab about his wife's behaviour. "So long as a snake creeps, she too is alive and kicking," replied the Arab. 1

An old woman said to her husband, "Are you not ashamed of committing adultery, while you have a lawful and desirable wife?" "Lawful, yes, but not desirable," said the man. 2

A woman fell sick, and said to her husband, "Woe is you, what are you to do if I die?" "What am I to do if you do not die?" replied the husband. 3

And old man came to a physician and said, "I have three wives and my back, bladder and waist continually ache, what should I eat to cure this pain?" "An electuary (ma'jūn) of nine divorces," replied the physicians. 4

Even the son denies his mother her rights and denotes her inferiority for being a woman:

A Mongol took a mother and her son, and raped them both. "If you see the Mongol, will you recognise him?" asked the mother of her son. "At the time when it happened, he was face to face with you, therefore, you ought to recognise him better!" replied the son. 5

The ruler of Āmol gave Serāj al-Dīn Qummī (6) a draft to collect a sum of money from a village whose name was Pas (back, bottom). Serāj al-Dīn went in search of that sum. There was heavy rain. He saw a man and a woman carrying a baby and a cradle on their shoulders, moving with difficulty. "Where is the path to Pas?" asked Serāj al-Dīn. "If I knew, I would not be thus burdened as I am today," answered the man. 7

1. Risāla-i Dilgushā, p. 91; Muhādarāt, vol. I, p. 222.

2. Ibid., p. 22.

3. Ibid., p. 96.

4. Ibid., p. 106. Each complete divorce, according to Islamic jurisprudence, needs to be stated three times.

5. Ibid., p. 111.

6. I was unable to identify such a personage in the available historical books. It seems, however, that he was a jester. Āmol is a city of Iran's second province, Māzandarān, which is located 240 km. to the north of Tehran.

7. Risāla-i Dilgushā, p. 119.

In the following anecdote, 'Ubaid quotes a woman who betrays her husband while he was on a distant journey, but it is not known whether the husband had committed the same dishonesty during his absence from the house.

A merchant had a beautiful wife named Zuhrah. He resolved to go on a journey. He made a white dress for his wife and gave a pot of indigo to his servant and said, "When you see any improper action from her, pour a little of this blue on her dress, so that if you are absent when I come back, her behaviour will be clear to me." After a while his master wrote to him:

I hope that Zuhrah does not commit any shameful action,
And there will be no sign of blue on her dress;

His servant wrote back:

If there will be any more delay in my lord's return
When he comes back, Zuhrah will have become a leopard. 1

In short, to understand that 'Ubaid's satire expounds the common belief of the age on the female gender, it is sufficient to quote the following wittily-designed maxim (latifa):

A ten year old girl is a shelled almond, a girl of fifteen years is a plaything for the players; a girl of twenty is plump, fat and soft; a woman of thirty years is the mother of daughters and sons, a woman of forty is old among the deceased, a woman of fifty years old should be killed with a knife, and a woman of sixty years old, the curse of God, the angels and the whole people on her! 2

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1. Ibid., p. 128.
 2. Ibid., p. 98.

Part III. Ethical

In theory we distinguish between ethics and politics. Writers, and in particular the philosophers, deal with each of them separately; but in practical life, at least for a satirist, ethics and politics, if not the same, are inseparable. We can equally assert that satire and utopian politics are also indivisible, for the one is a critique of the real world in the name of something better, the other is a hopeful construct of a world that might be. The hope feeds the criticism, the criticism the hope. Writers of Utopia have always known this: the one unanswerable argument for the utopian vision is a hard satirical look at the way things are in reality.

Again, as Elliot writes, "Once Engels spoke of Charles Fourier, the nineteenth century's complete Utopian, as one of the greatest satirists of all time."¹ Here the connection may seem odd as well, for we normally think of Utopia as associated with the ideal, satire with the actual. In fact, the two modes — utopia and satire — are linked in a complex network of genetic, historical and formal relationships. To understand this it is not necessary to go any further than to quote France's Voltaire and England's Orwell. The former's Candide, perhaps his wittiest novel, deals with the problems of suffering and the existence of evil, and in it Voltaire attacks the hopelessness and callousness of the "all is for the best" philosophy, as personified by the tutor Pangloss, the pupil of Leibniz (1646-1716), the German philosopher, and sharply satirizes his "sufficient reason" and the pre-established harmony", declaring that if the disasters that befall

1. Robert E. Elliot, The Shapes of Utopia, p. 24.

the hero occur in the best of all possible worlds then worse is unthinkable. He ironically mocks this philosophy, saying, "It is nothing but an insult added to the miseries we endure."¹

Orwell's celebrated maxim, on the other hand, is both satirical and ideal: "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."² Therefore, it emerges that we are not quite able to distinguish as mentioned above, between politics and ethics in satire. But since we have already stated 'Ubaid's satirical views on politics and justice — so far as it was possible — here his views on ethical issues are stated. The second chapter of 'Ubaid's Akhlāq al-Ashrāf deals with courage. "Philosophers have said," he states,

that the human soul has three different faculties which are the sources of the various human actions: first is the faculty of thinking or speech (nāṭiqā) which brings out thought and discernment; the second is the faculty of anger (ghaḍabiya) and it is the procedure to take risks and the ambition to obtain superiority and domination; the third is the faculty of sensuality (shahawiya) which is called animality (bahimiya) as well, and it is the source of requiring food, drink and enjoying the female.

'Ubaid continues that

When in a person the faculty of thinking becomes moderate in itself, it produces in its holder the enthusiasm towards gaining certain sciences such as philosophy; and whenever the faculty of anger becomes moderate and obedient to the faculty of thinking, the result will be the virtue of bravery (shajā'at); and whenever the act of the soul of sensuality becomes moderate and follows the faculty of thinking, the consequence will be chastity ('iffat). Finally,

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1. Candide, p. 124. See also his Philosophical Dictionary, pp. 68-74, under "Bien tout est", All is good.
 2. George Orwell, Animal Farm, p. 114; see also "Orwell as Satirist", from Three Modern Satirists by Stephen J. Greenblatt (New York, Yale University Press, 1965).

when all these three faculties have been acquired in the soul and intermixed, the result will be the perfection of virtues, which is called justice ('adālat). 1

After having discussed this adopted morality, which comes from Aristotle and the Islamic peripatetics such as Ibn Sīnā (d. 428/1036), Ibn Miskawaih (d. 421/1030), and Khwāja Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī (d. 672/1370), he states that

the philosophers termed the brave man he who has intrepidity, high ambition, tranquillity of soul, constancy, forbearance, moral heroism, humility, zeal and tenderness. But at present, our lords say that for a person who steps forth on dangerous causes, and fights others, there will be nothing but two alternatives: either he overcomes and kills the enemy, or else he fails. Now, if he kills his enemy, he commits the killing of an innocent person and will receive the consequence either in this world or in the other. Or else, the enemy will overcome, and he must enter Hell because of his misconduct. 2

To prove his point, 'Ubaid goes on to say,

which reason is clearer than that whenever there is a wedding invitation, a musical evening, or a gathering wherein there is food, sweets, robes of honour, or gold, they invite to such a place the effeminate, musicians and buffoons of the city; but wherever there is one who has to use arrow and spear, they swell a foolish man with pride saying, "You are a giant, a hero, a breaker of armies and brave athlete", and send him to meet the enemy swords. When they kill that miserable man in battle, the effeminate and catamites taunt him, shaking their bottoms. When they kill a hero in the battle-field, these people look at him from a far distance and say, "O my lord! live infamously, live long." The wise man should always bear in mind the maxim of the Khurāsānī heroes who say, "Men jump

1. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, pp. 14-15:

"...و چون این سه جنبه فضیلت حاصل آید و با هم فواید گردد، از هر سه حالت به حاصل گردد که کمال فضایل بدان بود و آن فضیلت را عَدَالَت گویند."

2. Ibid., pp. 15-16.

into the battle-field, but we jump into the hay-rick." It is said from a youthful Isfahānī that in a desert a Mongol saw him and attacked. The youthful man because of his perfect cleverness entreated him, saying, "My lord, do not kill me, come and violate me instead." The Mongol had pity on him and acted according to his request, and he avoided being killed by means of his expedient. It is said that he was alive thirty years after that event. What a happy youth! 1

Then 'Ubaid carries on his ironical satire, "O friends! you should make the most of their style and tradition of living; pity our poor parents who lived in ignorance and they could not understand these excellent meanings."² This chapter, in which every word has a sharp allusion to the corruption of the moral values of a society in which humanity and virility had died and mockery, cowardliness and impudence were adopted instead, leads to another chapter on chastity. "They supposed," he writes,

that chastity in ancient times was one of the cardinal virtues, and in its definition they have said, "Chastity is continence or freedom from ornament and affectation." They were uttering the word chaste for a person who could withhold his eyes from looking at a prohibited woman, and his ear from hearing ill speeches about an absent person; his hands from stealing other people's possessions; the tongue from slandering and the soul from *unsuitable desiring*."³

Then he gives samples of the ancient person's chastity. "Manṣūr-i Ḥallāj⁴," he writes, "when hanged, said, 'In my childhood I was passing

1. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

4. Al-Ḥallāj (the wool-carder), Abu 'l-Mughith Husain b. Manṣūr, originally Persian but Arabic-speaking mystic, theologian (244-309/857-922). For the details of his works and life, see L. Massignon, La Passion d'al-Ḥallāj, Martyr, mystique de l'Islam (Paris, 1929); A.J. Arberry, Revelation and Reason (London-New York, 1957), pp. 29-30 and 107-108.

by a path, I heard a woman's voice from the roof. To see her I looked up, now this looking down from this gallows is the punishment of that action."¹

He then describes the adopted morality of the age, saying:

Our nobles, however, at present believe that the deceased have made a great mistake on this subject, and they have spent their precious life both in ignorance and deviation; because the aim of life and the factual end of this world is enjoying oneself in amusement and debauchery,

and this cannot be achieved except "by means of fornication and enjoying prohibited things", and on the other hand,

accumulating money is impossible except by teasing people by means of ruthlessness, calumny and applying bad language to their wives and families. Thus, anyone who practices chastity, will be deprived of pleasure, happiness and accumulating money; and one should never call him alive, because his life is absurd and he will be punished for the reason that he acted against this Koranic verse, "Did you suppose that we have created you in vain, and that you would not return to us." 2

Again,

What a silly man is he who has the chance to make love in private with a beautiful woman, and he refrains from enjoying her love by saying, "I am chaste", so he becomes deprived, whereas he can never have such an opportunity again throughout his lifetime ... The man whom they previously called chaste, continent and self-controlled, our nobles now call him an ass' anus, unfortunate and impotent. They say, "Eyes, ears, tongue and other limbs have been created to attract advantages

1. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, p. 17:

منصور خلیج را چون بردار کردند گفت: در کوچه‌ای از شامی می‌گذشتم آواز زنی را از بام شنیدم، از بهر نظر راه بالا می‌نگریستم. اکنون از دار به زیر می‌نگریستن گفت: آن بالا می‌نگریستن می‌دانم.

2. Ibid., p. 18; Koran, 23:117.

and to repel disadvantages. Everybody has to see whatever seems pleasing to him, to hear whatever appears delightful to him; and to gain one's interests one must not avoid malice, teasing, calumny, coquetry, abusive language and giving false evidence. He must pay no heed that someone may suffer from his acts and speeches and be ruined ... Whatever you fancy do, and say whatever you wish, ... it is necessary to make no hindrance in this way because "prohibition is blasphemy". 1

He must think of it as a real finding, because we observe nowadays that anybody who does not submit himself (or herself) to copulation, always becomes unfortunate, vanquished, and suffers his whole life in disappointment and abandonment ... Anybody who did not submit himself to copulation never enjoyed being a ruler, a minister, a hero, an army-breaker, a wealthy man, a statesman, and above all a shaikh or preacher ... I approve of the fact that our nobles are saying the truth after having experienced it many times, and they are quite right, because it has been proved now that having a pure anus (i.e. being honest and chaste) has no good purpose and derives no blessing. A person must give and take; because the stability of world affairs rests on exchange ... 2

It should be mentioned here that one of the most comic passages of 'Ubaid's parody is in the Firdawsian style, and can be found in this chapter. This piece contains ten couplets and has been extremely well versified, but because of its harsh and coarse satire it hardly lends itself to translation. 'Ubaid, describes battles here in the most direct and symbolic way as homosexual intercourse between the two famous heroes of the Shāhnāma, Rustam and Humān.³

'Ubaid next discusses the fourth virtue, justice: "The ancient philosophers have considered justice among the four cardinal virtues,

1. Ibid., p. 18. The saying "prohibition is blasphemy" (al-man'u Kufrun) is famous among the mystics. They mean by it generosity towards one's brethren and friends letting them to use one's possessions and belongings. See Suhrawardī, 'Awārif al-Ma'ārif (ed. in the margin of al-Ghazzālī's al-Ihya), vol. IV, pp. 182-183. 'Ubaid makes here an excellent parody of the saying, using it satirically according to his purpose.
2. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, pp. 18-19.
3. See Bausani's article on "Hidjā'" in the Encyclopaedia of Islam.

believing that it is the foundation of all affairs either in this world or in the next. They confirmed the fact that the establishment of the earth and the heavens rests on justice¹, and for this very reason they gave advice to the nobles, kings and rulers that they should always practice justice." Then he states the adopted view on justice which we have examined in the second part of this chapter.

In the fifth chapter 'Ubaid speaks of generosity (sakhāwat). Here he has not given us the customary definition of generosity, perhaps as it is banal and well-known, but he says that in ancient times "they favoured generosity, praising anyone who possessed this virtue." They always "recommended their children to be so. If someone practiced this conduct, people used to praise him, the men learning wrote books about him and the poets eulogized him with fervent panegyrics." Then, as usual, he illustrates the adopted morality of his age:

But our nobles, who are exceptional in view of stable intellect and sharp thinking from the great masters of the past ages, thought on this subject seriously indeed, and immediately the defects of this conduct appeared to them and it became clear that the decline of the old dynasties was due to their generosity and lavishness. Therefore, they say that one must escape under the protection of jealousy in order to be rid of the people's troublesomeness and live a happy life. They advise us that money is second to none and it is like one's own life. He who spends his entire life gathering it, is unwise to waste it in buying clothing, drink, food and even for preparation his body's tranquillity, or in paying it to a person who praises him. It follows, therefore, that if a person has accumulated huge wealth, nobody is able to gain a penny from his damned hands even by means of a thousand dentists' forceps. 3

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1. See Suyūṭī, Jāmi' al-Saghīr, vol. II, p. 118. He regards this hadīth as a confirmed (mawthūqun bih) one.
 2. Akhḷāq al-Ashrāf, pp. 23-24.
 3. Ibid., pp. 24-25.

Then 'Ubaid relates anecdotes and proverbs about such miserly and wealthy men. He writes down a recommendation from a rich man to his son, "O son! beware always of saying, 'Yes,' say 'no' continuously, and be sure that as long as you live with the word 'no', you will reach the heights, and as long as you say 'yes', your heart will be filled with displeasure."¹

It is said that a nobleman who was second only to Korah in wealth was approaching his end. When he no longer had hope of life, he summoned his dear children who were the progeny of the house of nobility and said, "O children! I troubled myself at home and abroad many years and squeezed my throat by means of starvation in order to reserve these few dinārs. Beward of negligence in protecting it, ... and if somebody says that he has seen me in his dreams begging you for a piece of sweet food, do not be deceived by his tricks, because I would never say such a thing and a dead man eats nothing; and even if I show myself to you in your dreams and petition the same, pay no attention, for these sorts of dreams are not right, instead they are confused dreams (adghāth-i ahlām). It may be that it is the devils that send you these, because it is impossible to eat in the afterlife things that I had not eaten in my lifetime." He said this and died. 2

In another place, he quotes from the nobles of the age that "anybody who wishes to gain greatness, has to store whatever he possesses in order to become honoured; do you not see that all the nobles of our age keep stores?"³

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1. It seems that 'Ubaid has made another parody here having in his mind the opposite of which he states, that is 'Amr b. 'Ubaid once told Ḥafṣ b. Sālim inhibiting him from jealousy and of saying "no". See Ibn Qutaiba, Uyūn al-Akhbār, vol. III, p. 137:

«أَتَى عَمْرُو بْنُ عَبْدِ حَفْصِ بْنِ سَالِمٍ. فَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ أَحَدٌ مِنْ حَشَمَةِ ثِيَابٍ إِلَّا قَالَ: «لا» فَقَالَ عَمْرُو: لَأَقْلَمَ مِنْ قَوْلِ «لا» ثَمَانًا «لا» كُنْ فِي الْجَنَّةِ»

2. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, pp. 25-26.

3. Ibid., p. 27:

«بزرگان گفتند که هر که بزرگی خواهد باید هر چه دارد انبار کند تا بدان عزیز باشد؛ بپنی که اکنون همه بزرگان انبارداری می کنند.»

In the sixth chapter 'Ubaid discusses meekness (hilm). "Meekness," he writes, "is forbearance, and the ancient sages attributed meekness to a person whom anger cannot provoke easily, and if an indecent event occurs to him, it does not disturb him." Then 'Ubaid launches one of his formidable ironies on the nobles of his age. He explains that although meekness has been changed in this age like other virtues, however,

our nobles, in fact, do not prohibit meekness entirely. They believe that although people are rude to a person who practices meekness, this temper contains certain benefits which are useful in ordinary life. The reason for this is that if a person has not endured pederasts and rogues in his childhood and is not both meek and dignified, at present he will not be able to tolerate sharp rebukes in the assembly of the nobles: they cannot handle his anus with their fingers, cannot pull his beard off, cannot throw him into the pool and cannot abuse his wife or sister. 1

Therefore, meekness means dastardliness and cowardliness, and submitting oneself to all sorts of meanness. It was natural on the other hand in such circumstances in which noble ladies "proclaimed publicly sexual relationships with anyone they fancied"², those who kept the ancient moral values became

nervous and were going mad, or mutilated their servants and associates. They were sad day and night fearing lest someone would blame a member of their family, ironically accusing them of fornication or unchastity. But people whose honoured ladies were adorned by means of meekness and dignity, even if people were tearing up the anus' of their relatives in front of them, paid no attention at all. 3

1. Ibid., p. 29: «تا شخص در کودکی تحیل یا بر غلام یا بر گان و او را بش نکرده است و در آن حلیم و دانا را کار نکرده است، اکنون در مجلس و محافل آگاه بر سبلی و مالش بسیار می موزد، انگشت در گوشش نمی گذند، ریشش بر نمی کنند و در حوضش نمی اندازند دشنام های فاحش بر... زن و خواهرش نمی شمارند.»

2. Ibid., p. 23.

3. Ibid., p. 30.

The consequence of this kind of meekness was evident "as long as he was alive, he lived feeling at home: he was satisfied with his wife and relatives, and they were free and secure from his suspicion. If once an unsociable person brought a charge against him, he did not pay attention to it saying, 'If a dog barks on the roof of the hay-rick, you should not care about it.'"¹

In the seventh chapter of his treatise On the Ethics of the Aristocracy, 'Ubaid speaks about four other moral qualities, modesty (hayā), loyalty (wafā'), truthfulness (ṣidq) and compassion (rahmat and shafaqat). "Modesty," he relates,

is the restriction of the soul in order to avoid conducting indecent actions which cause blame; loyalty is the offering of assistance to those from whom he had formerly received assistance, to recompense his goodness; truthfulness is to be consistent with one's friends in order not to say something opposite to the truth of one's tongue, and lastly compassion is that quality that if he should observe something harsh or rough from somebody, he would pity him by way of helping him to remove it from himself. 2

Now these are the abolished doctrines of the deceased which no longer exist. As it is stated here and there in the course of this thesis, the environment in which 'Ubaid lived, the eighth/fourteenth century, was a chaotic one. Each day the cities were in the hands of a different plunderer, but later were inherited by someone else. These were people who proclaiming themselves warriors against the infidels had swords continually dripping in blood. How could a person who dared to blind his father worry about the poor people and their

1. Ibid., p. 30.

2. Ibid., p. 32.

destiny?¹ Thus, 'Ubaid, after explaining the ancient views on the four qualities stated above, goes on to state adopted views. "Our nobles," he writes,

maintained that these morals were quite exhausted and hollow. Any person who is affected by these malignant morals, will also be a loser, throughout his lifetime he will not be able to achieve any aim, whatsoever it may be. But we observe on the contrary that anybody who is busy with impudence and immodesty can peel people's skin: he does whatever he wants; he says whatever he fancies, pays no heed to anybody, leaves behind him all hindrances, and gains the highest positions; people fear his outrages and keep silent. Consequently, the poor man who is qualified with the virtue of modesty is left behind door and has been beaten by the doorkeepers and left scratching the back of his head looking at the outrageous men disappointedly. 2

Loyalty has no better destiny.

Because the aristocracy of the age believe strongly that "loyalty is the result of the meanness of the soul and the domination of jealousy, and whenever a person reaches a climax in loyalty, they liken him to a dog. Any person should chase his own interest; and when he obtains it and nothing remains to be gained, he should pay no heed even if the oppressed is his own father. Every morning he should live with another person, and every night communicate with another group, and be sure that "in any pot there is another sort of dish". What is more evident than this, that a loyal person always becomes sorrowful and brings his sweet life to an end without gaining any advantage, as happened to Farhād, who dug the mountain Bisutūn in order to find his beloved Shīrīn, and never achieved his aim but lost his life instead; or the poor man Majnūn-i Banī 'Āmir, who was a wise and learned man. He suddenly fell in love with a girl named Laylā. In order to show his loyalty to her, he led a bitter life and never enjoyed the fruition of the relationship. Our nobles tell the truth: a virtue whose results are so damned is better abandoned. 3

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1. This is an indication to both Mubārīz al-Dīn's ruthlessness and his son Shāh Shujā'-'s anathematizing his father, which have been derived from the following lines by Ḥāfiẓ (*Diwān*, p. 367):

دل منہ بر دینی دایم باد ز آنکہ از وی کس وفاداری ندید
شاه غازی تحسین گیتی نشان آنکہ از شمشیر او خون می چکید
آنکہ روشن بود جهان بنفش بدو میل در چشم جوان پیش کشید

2. *Akhlāq al-Ashrāf*, pp. 32-33.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

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Truthfulness is also troublesome, because our nobles firmly believe that this is the most inferior of the virtues. For the origin of both enmity and prejudice is truthfulness. Anyone who practices truthfulness can gain honour from anybody. He must flatter as far as he can in front of his masters and friends by means of deliberate lying and speaking hypocritically. He should always use the sentence, "His Majesty said the truth"; he should say those things that suit the temperament of the people. If for instance, the king says at midnight, "Now it is midday", he must jump forward at once saying, "You are right, today the weather is very hot" (1), and to confirm it, he should swear by the Koran, the holy book, and on his own marriage that such is the case. If he is the companion of an old, miserly, ugly and effeminate man, and this man is speaking, he has to call him the great hero of the age, the world's most pure anus, the handsome young, the Joseph of Egypt, the Hātam of Tayy in order to obtain gifts and gold from him, and his friendship therefore becomes stronger in his heart. 2

Now, if a person on the contrary does not wish to live like this, wishes to be truthful, he will suddenly address a nobleman by means of exhortation saying, "You have submitted yourself to sodomy in your childhood many times, now you had better abandon it and prevent your wife and sister from this infamous practice as well; or if he calls a bare-headed man bald, or a man of large testicles by his true attribute, or a harlot a whore, because of these truths they will all be upset with him. It is, thus, not for nothing that the former sages have said, "White lies are better than seditious truthfulness." 3

What is clearer than the fact that

if an honest man gives a hundred true witnesses in a case, they do not believe him; indeed he becomes

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1. Here 'Ubaid criticizes ironically Sa'dī's famous lines on obsequiousness and conservatism (Gulistān, p. 32 of Kulliyāt):

بجزن خویش باشد دست شستن
بباید گفت آنکس ماه و پرده

خلاف رای سلطان رای حجت
اگر خود روز را گوید شب است این

2. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, p. 35.

3. Again 'Ubaid quotes Sa'dī, and ironically vindicates him. See Gulistān, p. 29:

« دروغ مصلحت آموز به که راست فتنه انگیز »

despised because of his assertion, and they try to refute him with a hundred and one pretexts. If, however, a dishonest man gives a false witness, they bribe him and help him in many ways, so that he can do so; as is the case today, because thousands of people in different Islamic cities, among the judges, shaikhs, jurisprudents, witnesses and their followers gain their means of livelihood in this way. 1

The nobles of our author's age did not accept in the same manner the compassion and pity that had been adopted by the deceased.

They vehemently rejected it. They claimed that anybody who had mercy on an oppressed man or pitied a deprived person, he rebelled against God, exposing himself to God's anger and dislike. Because nothing happens in this world which God does not know. Thus, everything which occurs to anyone, is deserved: the dog should be hungry, the raven blind and the goat thin.. 2

To prove their point, they refer to the heavenly books. Take for example the incident when

in the time of the Prophet, the believers told the unbelievers: 'Feed the poor.' They answered back that the poor were God's own creatures; if God wanted, He would feed them; but if He did not feed them, why should they feed them, as is recited in the Koran: "Do we feed those whom God feeds if He wishes?" (3) It is therefore necessary to show no compassion for any creature, and to pay no attention to the condition of the oppressed, criminal, needy, suffering, affected, wounded, orphans, those encumbered by a numerous family, paupers, servants who have grown old in a house, or paralytic men; but on the contrary as far as they can they should torment them in order to win God's favour, hoping to obtain the high degrees and blessings. 4

1. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, pp. 35-36.

2. Ibid., p. 36:

« می فرمایند که هر کس بر مظلومی یا بر محرومی رحمت کند عیسیان در زنده باشد... بدان دلیل که هیچ امری بخواب خدا حادث نشود... هر کس هر چه بدوی رسد سزاوار آنست: «لَا تَزِدُ لِلْعَذَابِ»
زاغ کور دگر لاغر به. «أَنْظِمُ مَنْ لَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ أَطْعَمَهُ...»

3. Koran, 36:47:

4. Akhlāq al-Ashrāf, p. 37.

‘Ubaid brings his treatise to an end by fulfilling his irony in a manner which has two meanings: superficial and allegorical. He therefore assumes a double audience, one that is deceived by the surface meaning of the words, and the other that catches the hidden sense and laughs with the deceiver at the expense of the deceived. Accordingly he writes,

This is what I had promised to the brethren at the beginning of this treatise. I hope that if the beginner practices the "adopted morals" of the nobles of this age and masters them, he will enjoy their consequences as fully as possible in this world and in the next.

CHAPTER VI

THE SOURCE OF 'UBAID'S ANECDOTES

In the fourth chapter of this study, a description of 'Ubaid's largest treatise, the Dilgusha, was given¹, and there it was promised that in this, the last chapter, his probable sources would be given. There is no doubt that a further search in the books of adab would reveal some more of his sources, but this would not be an easy task, and indeed, in terms of the effort required it would not be fruitful.

In order to present 'Ubaid's sources as economically as possible, the sources themselves have usually not been quoted in full, but full references to where they may be found are given. In cases where there is a significant departure from the original, then it has been deemed necessary to quote it so as to allow the reader to appreciate the nature of the borrowing and the manner of adaptation. The following anecdotes have been divided into two sections, the Arabic and the Persian.

The text of 'Ubaid's anecdote is marked by a "T" (text) and the source by "S" (source) and page references to 'Ubaid's text is given in parentheses at the end of the text.

1. See pp. 176-184.

I. Arabic

1. T) Once Anusharwān was sitting in his court to hear grievances. A short man came crying, "I am oppressed." "Nobody is able to do injustice to a short man," said Anusharwān. "O prince! the man who oppressed me is shorter than me," said the crying man. The King laughed and ordered justice to be done to him. (Dilgushā, p. 90).
S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 286. See also p. 179 of this thesis.
2. T) They said to a man: "Why is your son not like you?" "Should our neighbours abandon us so that our children become like us?" said the man. (Ibid., p. 90).
S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 238.
3. T) They said to a soldier: "Why do you not come out to fight the infidels?" "I swear by God that I do not know any of them and none of them know me, therefore how can enmity arise between me and them?" replied the soldier. (Ibid., p. 90).
S) al-Bayān, vol. III, p. 233. See also p. of this thesis.
4. T) Abu 'l-'Aynā attended a reception. They presented to him a jar of paludah. "This paludah was made before God's revelation came to the bee," said Abu 'l-'Aynā. (Ibid., p. 91).
S) Tabaqāt al-Shu'arā', p. 409; Muhādarāt, vol. IV, p. 619. See also Koran, 16:71: "Your Lord inspired the bee..."
5. T) Once Juhā went to market to buy a donkey. A man came to him and asked, "Where are you going?" "To the market to buy a donkey," replied Juhā. "Say: Inshallah," said the man. "There is no need to say Inshallah," replied Juhā, "because the donkey is in the market and the money is in my pocket." But when he entered the market, a thief stole his money. Then, on his way home, the same man met him and said, "Whence do you come?" "From the market, Inshallah, my money was stolen, Inshallah, and I did not buy any donkey Inshallah, I am returning in despair and shame Inshallah," replied Juhā. (Ibid., p. 91).
S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 193.
6. T) A Christian said to a Magian, "For how long have you given up copulating with your mothers?" "Since they claimed that they produced gods," replied the Magian. (Ibid., p. 91).
S) Muhādarāt, vol. IV, p. 619.

7. T) They asked an Arab about his wife's behaviour. "So long as a snake creeps, she too is alive and kicking," replied the Arab.

S) Muhādarāt, vol. I, p. 222.

8. T) Mu'āwiya was famous for his meekness, and nobody could make him angry. Once a man claimed that he could make him angry. So he came to him and said, "I have heard that your mother's bottom is really big, therefore I wish to marry her." "This was the very reason that Father loved her very much," said Mu'āwiya. (Ibid., p. 91).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. I, p. 222. Here Mu'āwiya's answer reads: "Perhaps you mean to irritate the master of Banī Tamīm?" asked Mu'āwiya. "Yes," replied the man. "Go away! I do not want to get angry."

9. T) A man came to a jurist and said, "I am a Ḥanbalite; I performed the ablution and stood to prayer according to Ibn Ḥanbal's doctrine. But while I was praying I felt a wetness in my trousers, which made it dirty and gave out a nasty smell." "God forgive you! You have defecated according to all the doctrines," said the jurist. (Ibid., p. 91).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. IV, p. 722.

10. T) They said to 'Ubāda: "What did your daughter inherit from her husband?" "Just four months and ten days," replied 'Ubāda. (Ibid., p. 92).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 216. Here the character is Ḥutay'a. See p. 68 of this thesis.

11. T) An old woman said to her husband: "Are you not ashamed of committing adultery, whereas you have got a lawful and sweet wife?" "Lawful, yes but not sweet," said the man. (Ibid., p. 92).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. II, p. 145.

12. T) They asked a slave girl: "Are you a virgin?" "I was, God forgive me," replied the slave girl. (Ibid., p. 92).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 609; Nuwairī, Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 18.

13. T) A woman called her husband a cuckold and pauper. "Praise be to God that I have no fault, because the first comes from you, and the second comes from God," replied the man. (Ibid., p. 92).
- S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 227; Ḥadīqa, p. 731. See also p. 180 of the present thesis.
14. T) They said to a man whose wife was notoriously disobedient: "Is it possible to find somebody to reconcile you both?" "But the only person who could bring peace between us is dead," said the man. (Ibid., p. 92).
- S) ʿUyūn, vol. III, p. 50.
15. T) A pederast asked a pander to bring him a handsome boy. He brought him a slave-girl. The man said, "I do not favour her at all." "Do you want one more beautiful than her?" asked the pander. "No, but I desire one with testicles and a penis." "I suggest that you hang a carrot and two onions from her waist and then take her as you would a handsome boy," said the pander. (Ibid., p. 92).
- S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 244; Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 25. In these two books the story is short, and the pederast's answer reads, "I do not board a ship without a mast."
16. T) Jammāz took a boy to his home. When, however, the boy left his house, another asked him what he did. "Jammāz took me to his house that I violate him," replied the boy. Hearing this Jammāz was shocked and exclaimed, "What! Me violated? A slander! Pederasty, too, is not proven without the sworn testimony of a guardian and two witnesses." (Ibid., p. 92).
- S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 245.
17. T) A ghulām came to Baghdad from Ḥims, and he found the city profitable. His mother wanted him to return to Ḥims to repair their watermill. "O mother! a backside in Iraq is more profitable than a watermill in Ḥims," wrote the son to his mother. (Ibid., pp. 92-93).
- S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 245.
18. T) They said to a man who used to be hired (for sexual purposes) in Ramaḍān: "This month must be quiet for business." "God bless the Jews and Christians," replied the hired man. (Ibid., p. 93).
- S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 245.

19. T) A man gave two dirhams to a hired man. But when he wanted to violate him, the man prevented him, saying, "You have to be content with two thighs and no more." "My penis has hung between my thighs for fifty years, and I am not about to pay two dirhams for what you offer," said the pederast. (Ibid., p. 93).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 250; Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 30.

20. T) A narrator was saying, "O brethren! give thanks to God," and they gave. But they asked if there was any specific reason for doing so. "Give thanks, because the angels do not excrete, for if they did they would shit on us and make our clothes dirty." (Ibid., p. 93).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. I, p. 135.

21. T) A woman once came to a judge and complained that her husband denied her her rights, although she was a young woman. "I try my best not to be negligent, but I cannot perform the impossible," pleaded the husband. "But I cannot be satisfied with less than five times a night," complained the woman. "I am in a very awkward position for no case can be brought to me without my having to sacrifice myself, and I therefore undertake the other two times," pronounced the pious judge. (Ibid., p. 93).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 319.

22. T) A man said, "Moses was meddlesome." They asked, "Why?" "Because it was said to him, 'What is in your right hand, Moses?'" the man replied, "and the answer was that he had to say, 'This is my stick,' but he proceeded with what he did not need to speak about." (Ibid., p. 93).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. I, p. 135; and Koran, 20:18.

23. T) A woman brought her husband to a judge and complained, "This man is my husband and he is a pederast and does not make love to me." "I am impotent," said the man. "He is lying," claimed the wife. "Give me your genital organ to examine," said the judge. The man did so, and the judge was playing with it, and as the judge was very ugly, thus his genital did not rise, and became even more flaccid. "If a man with an erection sees your face he becomes flaccid. Give it to your ghulām," said the woman. The judge had a handsome ghulām. He gave it to him, and it was erected very soon. "Give the arrow to the archer," exclaimed the woman. "O rascal! take your wife and get out and give up your desires towards the judge's ghulāms," said the judge. (Ibid., p. 93).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. I, p. 201; Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 20.

24. T) A deaf man was praying and a man with foul breath was at his side. When the imām finished the prayer, the former said to the latter, "I suppose the imām made a mistake." "Yes, I guess he farted, don't you notice the smell," replied the deaf man. (Ibid., p. 94).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 291.

25. T) A man looked into a courtyard and saw a beautiful woman. The woman said, "Do not look, because although your genital rises, it is another person who makes love." (Ibid., p. 94).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 291. 'Ubaid's text is not clear. Rāghib's on the contrary is better-worded:

A man looked at a woman, "Why are you looking at something which causes your genital to be erected, and another person takes advantage," said the woman.

26. T) They asked a fox: "How many tricks do you know to save you from dogs?" "More than a thousand, and the best one is that neither I see him, nor he sees me," replied the fox. (Ibid., p. 94).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. IV, p. 706.

27. T) A man looked into a well. On seeing his countenance he came back to his mother and said: "O mam! there is a thief in the well." His mother came close to the well and looked down, and said: "I swear by God that there is a thief, and with him a bitch." (Ibid., p. 94).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. IV, p. 706; Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 16.

28. T) They saw a shaikh who was violating a she-ass which was farting throughout, while the shaikh continued to give thanks to God. They reproached him for his conduct. "Why should I not thank God for a penis which can produce such farts from a she-ass, and me a man of ninety years?" replied the shaikh. (Ibid., p. 94).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 257; Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 20.

29. T) A man said to a woman, "I wish to taste you in order to understand which is sweeter: you, or my wife?" "Why do you not ask my husband who has tasted me and your wife?" replied the woman. (Ibid., p. 95).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 271; Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 20.

30. T) A man came to a governor complaining, "I saw my daughter under one of your ghulāms, while he was violating her from behind." The governor summoned him and asked what was that. "They brought me from Turkistān to Ṭabaristān and violated me from behind. Then, the other man who bought me did the same. Then they brought me to you, and you violated me in the same manner. Thus, I could hardly suppose that it is an unlawful action," said the ghulām. (Ibid., p. 95).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 268.

31. T) A nobleman bought a slave girl. They asked him, "How did you find her?" "She has two qualities of Paradise: coolness and wideness," replied the nobleman, (Ibid., p. 95).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 262.

32. T) They said to a pederast: "How is it that the secrets of the thief and the adulterer remain hidden, but yours become disclosed and celebrated?" "How should not a man be celebrated and disgraced whose secret is with the youth?" replied the pederast. (Ibid., p. 95).

S) Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 21.

33. T) A woman farted on her wedding night, and became ashamed and wept. "Do not weep," said the husband, "because the bride's fart is an indication of abundance." "Then can I fart one more?" asked the bride. "No, because the granary has not capacity for more than one," replied the husband. (Ibid., p. 95).

S) ʿUyūn, vol. IV, p. 101.

34. T) A man protested against a dancing slave girl saying, "Is there any art in your hands?" "No, but the art is in my feet," replied the dancer. (Ibid., p. 96).

S) ʿUyūn, vol. IV, p. 111.

35. T) A nomad travelled, but he returned disappointed. They asked him, "What benefit did you make from your journey?" "We did not take any advantage from our journey except for shortening our prayer," replied the nomad. (Ibid., p. 96).

S) Akhbār al-Zirāf, p. 71. See also p. 197 of this thesis.

36. T) A man complained to Abu 'l-'Aynā' about his own wife. "Do you wish her to die?" asked Abu 'l-'Aynā'. When the complainer replied that he would not, Abu 'l-'Aynā' then asked him why not, in view of the fact that he was tormented by her. The man replied that if his wife died, he too would die of sheer happiness. (Ibid., p. 97).
- S) Akhbār al-Zirāf, p. 82. See also p. 67 of this thesis.
37. T) They asked Abu 'l-Hārith, "Is it possible that a son could be born to a man of eighty?" "Yes, as long as he has a neighbour of twenty years," replied Abu 'l-Hārith. (Ibid., p. 97).
- S) 'Uyūn, vol. IV, p. 122. See also p. 64 of this thesis.
38. T) Abu 'l-'Aynā' said, "I saw a slave girl with a slave dealer, swearing by God that she would never come back to her owner. I asked her about her swearing. 'O sir! he violates me when I stand to pray or when I sit to pray, and he insults me for any pronunciation (tajwīd) while he himself recites the Koran wrongly. Moreover, he fasts Mondays and Thursdays, and breaks fast in Ramadān.'" (Ibid., p. 97).
- S) Muhādarāt, vol. I, p. 212.
39. T) A man with foul breath came to a physician complaining of his toothache. The physician opened his mouth. His mouth gave out an extremely foul odour. "This is not my business, you have to go to the dustmen," said the physician. (Ibid., p. 97).
- S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 288.
40. T) A tedious man visited a sick man and prolonged his visit. "I am suffering very much from my visitors," said the sick man. "In that case let me go and close the door," said the visitor. "Yes, but from the outside," replied the sick man. (Ibid., p. 97).
- S) Muhādarāt, vol. II, p. 439.
41. T) A group of friends accompanied each other on a journey and a parasite was among them. Each of them intended to share in the expenses by paying for something. One said, "I will buy the bread," and "I will buy the sweetmeats," said another, while the parasite was silent. "What do you want to provide?" they asked him. "Only the curse [of God]," replied the parasite. They all laughed and exempted him from paying. (Ibid., p. 97).
- S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 227.

42. T) They brought to Mu'tasim a person who was claiming that he was a prophet. "I witness that you are a foolish prophet," said the caliph. "I have not come except to foolish people like you," replied the man. (Ibid., p. 98).
S) Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 15.
43. T) A person said to Ḥajjāj, "Last night I saw you in my dream as if you were in Paradise." "If your dream is right, ruthlessness must have increased in the world," replied Ḥajjāj. (Ibid., p. 98).
S) Tha'ālibī, Qisṣas al-Anbiyā', p. 219.
44. T) A man stole some clothes and brought them to the market. But they stole it from him. When he was coming back, somebody asked him, "At what price did you sell the clothes?" "Just for the purchase price," replied the thief. (Ibid., p. 98).
S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 193.
45. T) A man said to his ghulām: "Bring me the dish, and lock the door." "But wisdom is that first I should lock the door and then bring you the dish," replied the ghulām. "Go free, because you are familiar with the conditions of prudence," said the man. (Ibid., p. 98).
S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 323; Nihāyat, vol. II, p. 665.
46. T) A tedious man asked a sick man: "What do you desire?" "I want only not to see you," replied the sick man. (Ibid., p. 98).
S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 31.
47. T) Once Muzabbid said to his wife, "Let me come on your hip." "I am not able to make my hip a rival [wife] to my vulva, with their close neighbourhood," replied the wife. (Ibid., p. 98).
S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 323.
48. T) They asked a man: "What has remained with you from the marriage instruments?" "Just the saliva," replied the man. (Ibid., p. 98).
S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 258.
49. T) A woman said: "A certain man violated me as though he was seeking in my vulva a treasure of the Jahiliyya." (Ibid., p. 98).
S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 264.

50. T) A man asked a physician: "What is the rumbling of the stomach (qarqara)?" "A fart which is not yet matured," replied the physician, (Ibid., p. 98).
- S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 275. Here 'Ubaid has shortened the anecdote. Rāghib's own version reads: A man said to a physician: "There is ma'ma' and qarqara in my stomach." "I have no idea about ma'ma', but the qarqara is a fart which is not yet matured," replied the physician.
51. T) A woman brought her husband to the judge complaining of his numerous copulations. The judge prescribed ten times every night. "But tell her to give me in advance of the turns of the other night when I would need it," petitioned the husband, when he was leaving the court, and the wife accepted his request. But three days later she came back to the judge and said: "O judge! help me, I have lost my patience, because he has taken five nights' advance in three nights." (Ibid., p. 99).
- S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 268.
52. T) A bald man said to a scabby man: "What is the matter with me because I see you in full armour without a helmet?" "I am going to borrow it from you," said the scabby man. (Ibid., p. 99).
- S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 336. 'Ubaid has extended the tale. Rāghib's version reads: A bald man told another man in whom he had seen a lot of scab: "I suppose you have worn a cuirass without a helmet."
53. T) An ugly-faced man was looking in a mirror at his ugly countenance and said: "Praise be to God who created me and made me so beautiful." A servant was standing close to him and he heard his words. Then the servant went out, and somebody asked him about his master. "He is at home lying to God the Almighty," said the servant. (Ibid., p. 99).
- S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 283. 'Ubaid has changed the last part of the anecdote. Here is Rāghib's version: "... Praise be to God who has created me so well-shaped." An effeminate hearing this exclaimed: "The mother of the person who caluminates God is a harlot!"
54. T) Abū Yazīd said: "I remained for a while without a woman who should meet my sexual needs. Then I found one, and after having done my purpose gradually, I said: "May I have your permission to withdraw?" She said, "A fly sat on a date-palm. Then it asked the tree if it could fly away. 'I did not feel your sitting, now how can I understand your flight,' said the date-palm." (Ibid., p. 100).
- S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 263. See also p. 68 of this thesis.

55. T) Al-Rashīd went out for a walk in the garden and Ja'far, the Barmakid, was with him. They saw an old man mounted on a donkey whose eyes were moist. Al-Rashīd winked at Ja'far, indicating that he wanted to mock the old man: "Where are you going, old man?" asked al-Rashīd. "To a certain place to do a job which is none of your business," he replied. "May I suggest a remedy which cures your eyes?" asked al-Rashīd. "I have no need of your remedy," replied the old man. "But you urgently need it," said al-Rashīd, "Take the wood of the air and the dust of the water and mashed truffles, and mix them all in a walnut shell and put it on your eyes, then it will soon cure this moistness," said the caliph. The old man said nothing, but leaned forward on his donkey, and broke a long fart saying, "This is the reward of your skill, and if we take further advantage of your remedy, we will increase your reward!" (Ibid., p. 100).
- S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. II, p. 437. Rāghib attributes the anecdote to 'Ubādat al-Mukhannath. See also Akhbār al-Zirāf, p. 41.
56. T) A big-nosed man married a woman, and said to her, "You do not know how noble I am, and that I am a sociable and forbearing man in disasters." "I have no doubt about your nobility and forbearance with your carrying this big nose for forty years," replied the woman, (Ibid., p. 100).
- S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 284.

II. Persian

1. T) They asked an old woman, "Do you prefer a village or a p..?" "I cannot cope with the rustics," replied the old woman. (Dilgushā, p. 102).
- S) Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 20.
2. T) In Qum they were beating a man whose name was 'Umrān. "Since he is not 'Umar, why are you beating him?" asked someone. "Not only is he 'Umar, he has got an extra alif and nūn from 'Uthmān's name," they replied. (Ibid., p. 106).
- S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. IV, p. 481. 'Ubaid presumably has changed Qazwīn to Qum, for the beginning of the story reads: "In Qazwīn, there is a village whose inhabitants are extreme Shi'ites ..."

3. T) A mu'adhdhin was calling to prayer while he was running. "Why are you running?" they asked him. "Because they say my voice is nice from a far distance, therefore I am running so that I may hear my voice from a far distance." (Ibid., p. 107).

S) Akhbār al-Zirāf, p. 72.

4. T) Sultan Maḥmūd saw a feeble old man who was carrying a knapsack of thistles. Having pity on him, the Sultan asked him, "Do you want me to give you some items so that you may be rid of this hardship: a few dīnārs, an ass, a few sheep, or a garden?" "Give me gold that I may put it in my pocket, give me the ass to mount, give me the sheep to drive in front of me, and give me the garden to rest and pray in the remaining days of my life, under your protection." The Sultan was pleased by his speech and commanded it to be so. (Ibid., p. 108).

S) 'Uyūn, vol. III, p. 128; Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā', pp. 57-8; Muḥāḍarāt, vol. II, pp. 547-8. 'Ubaid has changed the characters. In all these sources the personalities are Abū Dulāma and Maḥdī the caliph.

5. T) An Ardabīlī said to a physician: "I feel sick, what do you suggest as a remedy?" Feeling his pulse, the physician said, "Your remedy is to make a broth of five fat hens mixed with a flavoured male lamb boiled in saffron and eat it with honey, and vomit!" "You are a really wise man, mawlānā; if another person eats and vomits it, I will immediately eat it," replied the sick man. (Ibid., p. 109).

S) Muḥāḍarāt, vol. II, p. 436. 'Ubaid has developed the tale.

6. T) Once Sultan Maḥmūd was angry. Ṭalkhak wanted to bring him out of his mood. "O Sultan! what was your father's name?" asked Ṭalkhak. Being offended with him, the Sultan turned away, but Ṭalkhak again went in front of him and repeated his question. "O man! what is your business with that dog?" replied the Sultan. "Your father's name is understood, now what is your grandfather's name?" asked Ṭalkhak. Hearing this the Sultan laughed. (Ibid., p. 111).

S) Rūmī, Fīhi mā fīhi, p. 24.

7. T) A woman was claiming prophethood in front of Wāthiq the caliph. "Was Muḥammad a prophet?" asked the caliph. "Yes, he was," said the woman. "He has declared that there would be no prophet after him, therefore your claim is false," said the caliph. "But he said, 'no prophet', not prophetess," said the woman (Ibid., p. 112).
- S) al-ʿIqd, vol. VII, p. 163; Nihāyat, vol. IV, pp. 14-15.
8. T) A carpenter married a woman. After three months she produced a son. They asked his father, "Which name do you prefer for him?" "Because of his production in just three months you had better name him ambassador's courier," replied the father. (Ibid., p. 113).
- S) ʿUyūn, vol. IV, p. 122; Muhāḍarāt, vol. I, p. 353.
9. T) They brought a dish of egg-plant for Sultan Maḥmūd when he was hungry. Being pleased he said, "Egg-plant is a delicious food." A boon companion began a long speech in praise of the egg-plant. But when the Sultan was full, he said, "Egg-plant is really a harmful thing." The boon companion uttered an exaggerated speech to its detriment. "O fool! were you not praising it a short time ago?" said the Sultan. "Yes, but I am your boon companion, not the egg-plant's, and I must say something which pleases you, not the egg-plant," replied the man. (Ibid., p. 113).
- S) ʿUyūn, vol. III, p. 288; Muhāḍarāt, vol. II, p. 682.
 'Ubaid has changed wine to egg-plant.
10. T) A Qazwīnī had lost his donkey and was wandering around the city, giving thanks to God. "Why are you giving thanks?" they asked him. "Because I was not mounted on my donkey, and if I had been, I would have been lost for four days," replied he. (Ibid., pp. 116-117).
- S) Akḥbār al-Zirāf, p. 53.
11. T) A man wanted to blow on the fire; a wind came out of his backside. He immediately turned his back toward the fireplace saying, "If you are in a hurry, will you please do it?". (Ibid., p. 117).
- S) Rūmī, Mathnawī, Book III, p. 492. Rūmī attributes the action to a flutist.

12. T) A beggar came to the door of a house. There was a girl in the house. The beggar wanted a piece of bread. "We have no bread," replied the girl. "A piece of fire-wood," asked the beggar. "We have no fire-wood," replied the girl. "A glass of water," he asked. "We have no water," replied the girl. "Where is your mother?" asked the beggar. "She has gone to condole with some relatives," replied the girl. "But from what I see of your house, ten relatives ought to come to condole with you," replied the beggar. (Ibid., p. 120).

S) Jāhiz, al-Bayān, vol. II, p. 403; Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 32.

13. T) A man of Shirāz was boiling bang (henbane) in a mosque. The servant of the mosque seeing him began to abuse him. The man of Shirāz looked at him, and observing that he was lame, bald and blind, he yelled at him, "O man! God has not showed you so much kindness that you should be so fanatical about His house." (Ibid., p. 120).

S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. IV, p. 707. See also p. 182 of this thesis.

14. T) It is said that there was a woman with very pretty eyes. Once she went to the judge complaining of her husband. The judge, however, was a whore-monger. Being attracted by her eyes and lusting after the rest of her body, he supported her case. When the husband realised the reason for the bias, he pulled his wife's veil, revealing a face that was loathsome. Seeing her face, the judge was dismayed and said, "Woman! Rise and depart, for you have the eyes of one oppressed, and the face of an oppressor." (Ibid., p. 121).

S) Uyūn, vol. III, p. 32; Muhāḍarāt, vol. I, p. 201. See also p. 206 of this thesis.

15. T) Some watchmen passed a drunk Qazwīnī at night. They caught him saying, "Stand up, we want to take you to prison." "But if I could walk, I would go to my own house," replied the Qazwīnī. (Ibid., p. 122).

S) Rūmī, Mathnawī, Book II, p. 107.

16. T) Mawlānā Qutb al-Dīn visited a nobleman who was sick, and asked him, "What trouble have you got?" "I have got a fever," replied the nobleman, "and my neck is aching; but thanks to God since two or three days my fever has broken, although my neck is still aching." "Be hopeful that the other also will break in two days," said Qutb al-Dīn. (Ibid., p. 123).

S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. II, p. 414 and vol. II, p. 441.

17. T) A noble man went on a journey. He had an Indian ghulām in his house. When he came back, the lady had produced two blackish boys. Putting one of them on his shoulder, and the other running behind him, the ghulām went out to welcome his lord. "Whose is this boy?" asked the lord. "The lady's," replied the ghulām. "This is surprising," said the lord. "But this boy who is behind me is more surprising," replied the ghulām. (Ibid., p. 124.)

S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 272.

18. T) A person asked a preacher, "What is the name of Iblis' wife?" Calling him nearer, the pracher whispered, "O cuckold! how should I know her name?" When the man returned to the congregation, they asked him what the Mawlānā said. "Everybody who is interested must ask Mawlānā personally," the man replied. (Ibid., p. 124).

S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. I, p. 136; Akhbār al-Zirāf, p. 26; al-Mawardī, Adab al-Dunyā wa-'l-Dīn, p. 213. See also p. 211 of this thesis.

19. T) A man wanted to pray in the house of a Qazwīnī. "Where is the qibla?" he asked the Qazwīnī. "I have been here for two years, how can I know the real position of the qibla?" replied the Qazwīnī. (Ibid., p. 125).

S) Akhbār al-Zirāf, pp. 43-44. 'Ubaid has changed mughaffal (the fool) to the Qazwīnī.

20. T) A Bedouin followed (in his prayer) an imām who recited after the al-Fātiḥa, the verse: "The Arabs are extremists in blasphemy and hypocrisy." 1 Hearing this, the naïve man was upset, and struck the imām's neck with a severe blow. At the second part of his prayer, the imām recited after the Fātiḥa the verse " ... From the Arabs there are people who believe in God and the day of Resurrection." 2 "O cuckold! the slap improved you!" said the Bedouin.

S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. I, p. 140.

21. T) A poet saw a man in a mosque who was violating a boy. He insulted the man saying, "Are you not ashamed of pederasty in God's house?" The man escaped by some means or other. After a while when he looked at the mosque from a loophole, he saw that the poet himself

1. Koran, 9:97.

2. Koran, 9:99.

was violating a boy. He returned and asked, "What was that and what is this?" "Haven't you heard that 'things are permissible for the poet that are not so for others'?" (Ibid., pp. 125-26.)

- S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 322; Sanā'i, Hadīqa, pp. 669-700. 'Ubaid has presumably changed the last part of the story in order to parody the famous rule which is long since adopted among the poets that "things are permissible for the poet which are not so for others", which includes disregarding grammar if necessary. See Taftāzānī, Muṭawwal, pp. 191-194, under tarkhiṣāt al-shu'arā' (permissions for the poets).

22. T) The ruler of Nishābūr said to Shams al-Dīn the physician: "I am unable to digest food, what should I do?" "You have to eat digested things," replied the physician. (Ibid., p. 126).

- S) Muhādarāt, vol. II, p. 436. I was unable to identify Shams al-Dīn, it seems that he is an imaginary character. Rāghib's version too reads simply: "A sick man complained to a physician ..."

23. T) Mawlānā 'Aḍud al-Dīn sent a go-between to a lady to ask her hand in marriage. "I hear rumours about his being a fornicator and a pederast, thus I do not wish to be his wife," said the lady. They reported this to Mawlānā. In replying to her, Mawlānā sent the following words to her through his go-between: "Tell her, I can repent from fornication, but to avoid pederasty depends on the khātūn's generosity and kindness." (Ibid., p. 126).

- S) 'Uyūn, vol. IV, p. 37; Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 11. In these two books the story begins simply with "A man sent a go-between ..."

24. T) A deformed glutton was present at Yazīd's table. "How many are in your family?" asked the caliph. "I have got nine daughters," replied the man. "Who is more beautiful: your daughters or you?" asked Yazīd. "I swear by God that I am more beautiful and they are more gluttonous," replied the deformed man. (Ibid., p. 128).

- S) 'Uyūn, vol. III, p. 128.

25. T) A person claimed prophethood, and they brought him to the caliph. "What is your miracle?" asked the caliph. "My miracle is that what is in your heart is known to me; it is in your heart, now, that I am lying," said the claimant. (Ibid., p. 128).

- S) Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 15.

26. T) A merchant had a beautiful wife named Zuhrah. He resolved to go on a journey. He made a white dress for his wife and gave a pot of indigo to his servant and said, "When you see any improper action from her, pour a little of this blue on her dress, so that if you are absent when I come back, her behaviour will be clear to me." After a while his master wrote to him:
 I hope that Zuhrah does not commit any shameful action,
 And there will be no sign of blue on her dress;
 His servant wrote back:
 If there will be any more delay in my lord's return
 When he comes back, Zuhrah will have become a leopard."
 (Ibid., p. 128).
- S) 'Uyūn, vol. III, p. 110. 'Ubaid has developed the tale.
27. T) Ṭalkhak said, "I had a dream, in which the first part came true, but the second did not." When they asked the nature of his dream, he replied, "I dreamt that I was carrying a sack of treasure on my back, then defecated on my robe, due to the great weight of my burden. When I awoke I discovered the evidence of my incontinence but no sign of the treasure." (Ibid., p. 132).
- S) al-'Iqd, vol. VIII, p. 142. Here, 'Ubaid has changed Ash'ab to Ṭalkhak. See pp. 60-61 of this thesis.
28. T) There was enmity between a headman (of a village) and a preacher. Suddenly the headman died. When they buried him, they asked the preacher to say *incantations* on his tomb. "You should ask this from another person, because he hears my words grudgefully," replied the preacher. (Ibid., p. 132).
- S) Akhbār al-Zirāf, p. 30.
29. T) Ṭalkhak wanted to commit adultery with a woman, and the woman was not satisfied, saying, "Tonight is Friday night and tonight they write the punishment of sins in duplicate ." "Then we will suppose that we committed adultery twice on Saturday night," replied Ṭalkhak. (Ibid., p. 133).
- S) Muhādarāt, vol. IV, p. 425. 'Ubaid has slightly changed the structure of this tale.
30. T) A Qazwīnī was complaining: "They have stolen my weight-stone which was one hundred dirhams." "Look carefully, it may be on the scale," they said. "But they have stolen the scale too," replied the Qazwīnī. (Ibid., p. 134).
- S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 193.

31. T) Sultan Maḥmūd asked Ṭalkhak, "Why does war occur between people?" "O Sultan! you should not see and eat [such dirt]!" replied Ṭalkhak. "O rascal! what do you mean by talking such rubbish?" asked the Sultan. "Yes, it occurs in the very same manner. For a person eats dirt, that is talks rubbish, and the other answers back, and the result is fighting," replied the witty man. (Ibid., p. 134).
- S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 178. 'Ubaid has added his own characters to the anecdote, for in Rāghib's version it reads, "A person asked another ..."
32. T) Ṭalkhak's mule was stolen. "It was your fault that you did not take care," said one man. "It was the groom's fault for he left the door of the stable open," said another. "Was therefore the thief not guilty?" asked Ṭalkhak. (Ibid., p. 134).
- S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 193.
33. T) A person had a guest sleep on the ground floor of his house. However at midnight he heard the sound of the guest's laughter coming from upstairs. "What are you doing there?" asked the host. "I have rolled in my dream," replied the guest. "But people roll downwards, why have you rolled upwards?" asked the host. "That's why I was laughing," replied the guest. (Ibid., p. 134).
- S) Akḥbār al-Zirāf, p. 91.
34. T) A tailor was cutting a cloak for a Turk. The Turk was confident that the tailor would not be able to steal a piece of his cloth. Suddenly the tailor broke such wind that the Turk could not help laughing, and fell on his back. Taking the opportunity, the tailor took what he wanted. The Turk got up and requested the tailor to repeat such an exploit. "That would not be wise, for the cloak would become too tight," said the tailor. (Ibid., p. 135).
- S) Akḥbār al-Zirāf, p. 88. See also Rūmī, Mathnawī, Book VI, pp. 592-593.
35. T) A woman said to a man who was lingering while copulating, "Hurry up because I am extremely bored." "Had your vulva been a little tighter I would have finished long ago," replied the man. (Ibid., p. 135).
- S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 263.

36. T) An effeminate was plucking the hair of his face. They prevented him from doing so. "Why should I leave on my face what you do not leave on your backside?" asked the effeminate. (Ibid., p. 135).

S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 315.

37. T) Once they seized al-Muzabbid accusing him that he was drunk. But they could not notice any smell of wine from his mouth. "Vomit!" they told him. "Then who guarantees my dinner?" asked al-Muzabbid. (Ibid., p. 136).

S) 'Uyūn, vol. III, p. 277.

38. T) Once a dog bit al-Muzabbid. "If you want the wound to be cured, you should feed that dog with broth," they said to him. "Then, every dog in the world would come and bite me," replied al-Muzabbid. (Ibid., p. 136).

S) al-'Iqd, vol. VII, p. 232; 'Uyūn, vol. III, p. 277.

39. T) A man shot an arrow towards a bird, but it went the wrong way. "Well done!" said his friend. "Are you mocking me?" asked the archer. "No. I say well done to the bird not to you," replied the friend. (Ibid., p. 137).

S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 137; Akhbār al-Zirāf, p. 89.

40. T) They had stolen Ṭalkhak's shoes from the mosque and had thrown them into a church. "Praise be to God! I am a Muslim and my shoes are Christians," said Ṭalkhak. (Ibid., p. 137).

S) Akhbār al-Zirāf, p. 91.

41. T) A person was claiming that his eyes were aching and he was treating them with Koranic verses and prayers. "You should add some ointment (anzarut) to them," said Ṭalkhak. (Ibid., p. 137).

S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. II, p. 436; Akhbār al-Zirāf, p. 55.

42. T) A person was hiring a ghulām for the price of his food, and insisted that the ghulām ought to give him a discount. "O my lord, I know no other way except to fast on Monday and Thursday every week," said the ghulām. (Ibid., p. 137).

S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. II, p. 469; al-Māwardī, Adab al-Dunyā wal-Dīn, p. 201.

43. T) A person had rented a house in which the roof timbers were weak. He asked the landlord to strengthen them. "The timbers are merely praying to God," replied the landlord. "That is very good. But I fear that they may proceed to prostrate us!" answered the tenant. (Ibid., pp. 137-138).

S) Akhbār al-Zirāf, p. 89.

44. T) Mawlānā Quṭb al-Dīn was violating someone in his madrasa cell (hujra). Suddenly a person opened the door. "What do you want?" asked Mawlānā. "Nothing, I wished a place wherein I can perform my prayers," replied the man. "Are you blind?" yelled Mawlānā, "do you not see that it is so narrow in here that we have to sleep on top of each other?" (Ibid., pp. 138-139).

S) Nihāyat, vol. IV, p. 26. 'Ubaid has changed "an effeminate" to Quṭb al-Dīn.

45. T) Hārūn asked Buhlūl, "Who is the man you most admire?" "The person who fills my belly," he replied. "If I fill it, will you admire me?" asked the caliph. Buhlūl replied, "Perhaps, but you cannot obtain admiration on credit." (Ibid., p. 142).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. IV, p. 720.

46. T) A woman asked Ṭalkhak, "Where is the shop of the confectioner?" "In my lady's trousers," replied Ṭalkhak. (Ibid., p. 142).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 271. Rāghib attributes the nādira to Abu 'l-'Aynā'.

47. T) A woman who had buried her two previous husbands was crying on the death-bed of her third husband, saying: "To whom do you entrust me?" "To the fourth cuckold," replied the man. (Ibid., p. 142).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 22.

48. T) They asked Satan, "Which group do you like most?" "The brokers," he replied. "Why?" they asked. "Because although I was satisfied with their lies, they have added perjury," replied Satan. (Ibid., p. 144).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. II, p. 473. Rāghib attributes the story to al-Aṣmā'i.

49. T) Someone wanted to borrow a horse from a friend. "I do have a horse, but unfortunately it is black," replied the friend. "Is it not possible to mount on a black horse?" asked the former. "As I am not giving you my horse, this pretext will suffice," replied the latter. (Ibid., p. 144).
- S) al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān, vol. II, p. 189.
50. T) Once they were carrying a corpse along a road. A poor man was standing with his little son. The son asked his father, "What is in this coffin?" "A human being," replied the father. "Where are they carrying him?" asked the boy again. "To a place where there is no food, no firewood, no clothes, no bread, no drink, no silver, no gold and no carpets." "So, are they carrying him to our house?" said the boy. (Ibid., p. 144).
- S) al-Aghānī, vol. XX, p. 37 (Bulāq); Muhāḍarāt, vol. II, p. 506. See also Rūmī, Mathnawī, Book II, p. 174.
51. T) A grammarian was on board ship, and he asked the captain, "Have you read syntax?" "No," he replied. "Then you have wasted half of your life," said the grammarian. The next day there was a strong wind, and the ship was on the point of sinking. "Do you know how to swim?" asked the captain of the grammarian. "No," replied the grammarian. "In this case, you have wasted your entire life," said the captain. (Ibid., p. 145).
- S) Rūmī, Mathnawī, Book II, pp. 181-182.
52. T) A pederast persuaded a beardless youth for a few dinars. But when they began, the boy found out the man's penis was too big, and did not accept it. "Either let me do my work, or I will abuse Mu'āwiya the caliph," said the pederast. "Fortitude in the face of injury of the penis is simpler than hearing abuse of the Amīr al-Mu'minīn." Then he submitted, and during the action he was saying, "O God! this is little in support of your beloved friend. O God! I sacrificed myself to prevent abuse of Mu'āwiya, so you help me to be patient." (Ibid., pp. 145-146.)
- S) Muhāḍarāt, vol. III, p. 247.
53. T) A person saw in the passage-way of his own house another man who was violating a catamite. He cried and yelled, saying, "You have no right to sodomise in my house." The catamite was annoyed at his protracted shouting and said, "Hey! cry no more, you can come to the passage-way of my house, and offer your backside to your heart's content." (Ibid., p. 146).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 252.

54. T) A king had three wives: a Persian, an Arab and a Copt. One night he had slept next to the Persian, and he asked her, "What time is it?" "The morning," she replied. "How do you know?" he asked. "Because the smell of the flower and sweet basil have risen and birds are singing," she replied. Another night, he was in bed with the Arabian wife, and asked the same question. "It is morning," she said. "How do you know?" he asked her. "Because the marbles of my necklace make my chest cool," she replied. On the third night he was with the Coptic wife, and he asked the very same question. "It is morning because I have got to excrete," she replied. (Ibid., p. 146.)

S) Muhādarāt, vol. IV, p. 717. 'Ubaid has developed the anecdote largely.

55. T) A blind Arab was masturbating, saying "O Sukayma! I am your devoted lover." A libertine passed by him and dipping the tip of a stick he rubbed it in the blind man's face. The latter noticed its smell and changed his words to "O Sukayna! why did you break wind?" (Ibid., p. 148).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 256.

56. T) They asked Talkhak: "What is your opinion of a woman who, at the time of copulation, says to her husband, 'Alas! you have killed me, alas I am dead!'" "Let the husband kill and the wife die, their sins and blood-money I will undertake," replied Talkhak. (Ibid., p. 148).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 266; Akhbār al-Zirāf, p. 48. 'Ubaid has changed al-Sha'bī to Talkhak, his favourite mock-hero.

57. T) An Iraqi was in love with a woman. He went to her house with a he-ass and a slave-boy. The woman had a she-ass and a slave-girl. He himself copulated with the woman; the slave-boy made love with the slave-girl and the he-ass copulated with the she-ass. Observing this scene the man exclaimed, "O God! save us from the evil eye." (Ibid., p. 148).

S) Uyūn, vol. III, p. 102; Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 272.

58. T) A pederast took a catamite to his house. Putting two dirhams in his hand he said, "Lie down and let me do my work." "But I had heard that you take the boys to your home in order that they may violate you," replied the catamite. "Yes, the action is mine, and the claim is theirs; therefore you too lie down, and say whatever you like when you go out!" replied the pederast. (Ibid., p. 149).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 245.

59. T) A slave-girl came out of Hārūn al-Rashīd's palace waving a fan on which the following words were written: "The vulva is more in need of two penises rather than a penis to two vulvas." (Ibid., p. 149).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 202.

60. T) A teacher wanted to marry a woman whose son was in his school. The teacher struck the boy: "Why did you say to your mother that your teacher's penis was big?" The son complained to his mother, explaining what had happened. Shortly after the woman accepted his proposal of marriage. (Ibid., p. 149).

S) Muhādarāt, vol. III, p. 205.

61. T) At the time when Ibn Sīnā escaped from Hamadān for Baghdād in fear of 'Alā' al-Dīn, he saw there a man who had made a great gathering near the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab, claiming a knowledge of medicine and prescribing remedies. Enjoying the entertainment, he stood for a while. A woman brought him a urinal, and the pseudo-physician looked at it and said: "This sick man is a Jew." Then he looked again and said, "You are the servant of this ill man." "Yes, I am," replied the woman. He looked at the urinal again and said, "This sick man's house is on the east of the city." "Yes, it is," replied the woman. "Yesterday he ate yoghurt," said the pseudo-physician. "Yes, he did," replied the woman. The people were amazed at the pseudo-physician's knowledge. Ibn Sīnā wondered and remained silent until he had finished his work, then Ibn Sīnā went forward and asked, "How did you make these diagnoses?" "The same way that I recognised you as well, because you are Ibn Sīnā." "This is another problem," said Ibn Sīnā. When he insisted, the pseudo-physician said, "When that woman showed me the urinal, I saw a ghiyār (a strip of yellow cloth worn by Jews in Persia) on her sleeve. I understood that she was a Jew; and because her clothes were old I realised that she was somebody's servant; and because of the fact that no Jew serves a Muslim, I realised that her lord was

a Jew as well; and because a drop of yoghurt was spotted on her clothes, I realised that they had eaten yoghurt in that house and they had given a bit to the sick man, and since Jews' houses are located in the east side, I therefore realised that her house is there too." "I ratify these all, but how could you know me?" asked the philosopher. "There were today rumours that Ibn Sīnā had escaped from 'Alā' al-Dīn and he was coming here, and finally I recognised that no one but you can understand what I displayed," replied the pseudo-physician. (Ibid., pp. 150-151).

S) Baihaqī, al-Mahāsin wal-Masāwī', vol. I, pp. 57-58. As usual 'Ubaid has changed the characters to the familiar ones.

62. T) When Khwāja Bahā' al-Dīn Ṣāhib Diwān patted Majd al-Dīn-i Hamgar's backside, the latter immediately broke wind. "Why did you break wind?" asked Bahā' al-Dīn. Majd al-Dīn replied, "It is hardly fitting to allow the supplicant to go away empty-handed." (Ibid., p. 152).

S) Akhlāq al-Wazīrain, pp. 145-6. See also p. 68 of this thesis.

63. T) A woman in an assembly was next to her lover. The preacher was describing Gabriel's feather. Amid this situation, the woman put the corner of her chādūr on his knee and caught his genital organ, and when she realised it had risen, she inadvertantly yelled. The preacher was pleased and said: "O true lover! Did Gabriel's feather touch you on your heart that you sighed so amorously?" "I do not know about the feather of Gabriel touching my soul or my heart, but I know for certain that Israphil's trumpet touched my hand, and because of that I sighed so inadvertantly," replied the woman. (Ibid., p. 152).

S) Rumi, Mathnawī, vol. V, p. 522.

64. T) A rustic had a cow and a she-ass with a foal. The she-ass died. They were giving the milk of the cow to the foal, and therefore they had no milk. The rustic was upset and said: "O God! cause this foal's death, so my family should have the milk of this cow for their food." Next day when he went to the stable, he found the cow dead. The poor man was so astounded that he cried: "O God! I meant the ass; do you not know a cow from an ass?" (Ibid., p. 152).

S) Sanā'ī, Ḥadīqa, p. 647.

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